Better Homes & Gardens

SECRETS OF GETTING Organized™

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2023
July
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TACKLE CLUTTER TODAY!

TIDY UP YOUR ROOMS IN 30 MINUTES OR LESS

ENTRY MAKEOVERS TO GET OUT THE DOOR FAST

SMART STORAGE FOR YOUR GARAGE, CLOSET & PANTRY

FOLLOW OUR PLAN: WHAT TO TOSS THIS WEEKEND

EASY UPDATES TO TAME MESSY CABINETS

SPRING 2023

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10 DAYS ODOR CONTROL GUARANTEED*

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SPRING 2023

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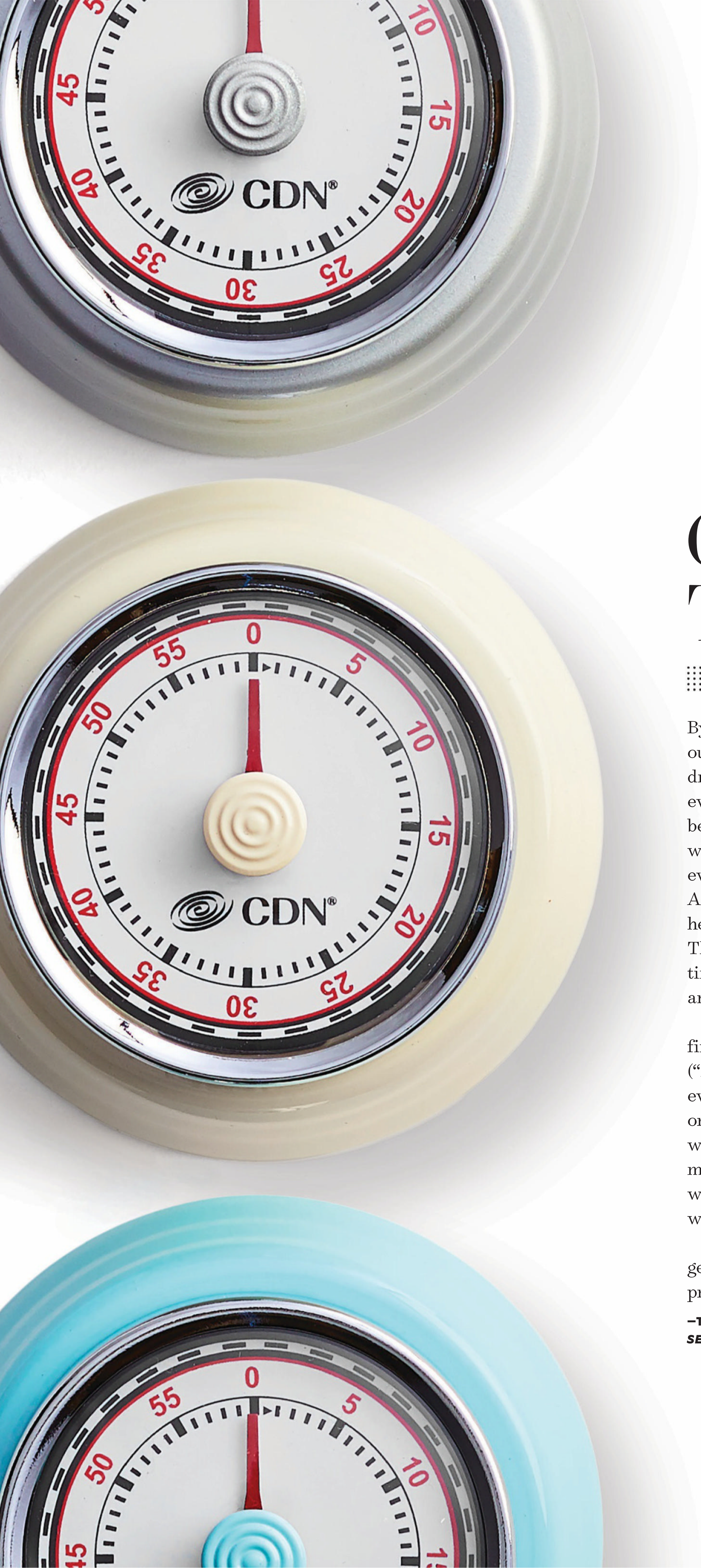


GOOD TIMES

By the time we've managed to get everyone out the door in the morning, worked a full day, driven the kids to various activities in the evening, and somehow squeezed in dinner before bed, many of us are left wondering where the time went. The struggle to fit everything in a day is frustratingly real. Although we can't give you more time, we can help you use the time you have more efficiently. That's why we've packed this issue with time-saving tips from professional organizers and productivity experts.

Getting your house organized can help you find more time too. An efficient mudroom ("Easy Entries," *page 36*) can simplify getting everyone out the door on time, and an organized pantry ("Pantry Power-Up," *page 54*) will expedite finding cooking ingredients. A messy closet can slow down your mornings, so we've also got tips for streamlining your wardrobe ("Clothes Overhaul," *page 70*).

There's no time like the present to start getting things in order. Here's to more productive days and a more organized house!

—THE EDITORS
SECRETS OF GETTING ORGANIZED™

CLUTTER CLEANSE

WHAT TO TOSS

EVERY ROOM IN YOUR HOME

Decluttering success is all about choosing the right projects. Build your organizing confidence with a whole-house action plan that quickly streamlines your most problematic spaces.

WRITERS **ASHLYN WARE** AND **BRIAN KRAMER** ILLUSTRATOR **BRITTANY MUELLER**

This cleanse gives you three clusters of mini decluttering projects. You start with clutter you can see (think of these as the easy wins) and then move on to the trickier clutter—the stuff that hides in cabinets, behind doors, and in drawers. Finally, you'll address the clutter you didn't even realize was weighing you down.

Keep the following tips in mind during every project as you learn to master the decluttering process.

LEAD THE CHARGE. Decluttering may sound overwhelming, but it's not out of your reach. If you're reading this and wanting to declutter, you're probably the best person to start the cleanse. Don't wait, just start small.

RECRUIT HELP, BUT BE REALISTIC. If asking your family for help sounds unrealistic, try to be firm in your requests. Get specific about what you need done and always set a deadline. ("By bedtime Sunday, I need you to put all of your toys in the living room in your toy basket.")

REINFORCE DEADLINES. Cleanse assignments carry weight for yourself and others when you back them up with both a carrot ("If you edit your T-shirts tonight, we can go shopping this weekend for anything you're missing") and a stick ("After Saturday, any worn-out towels will be donated to the local animal shelter").

SCHEDULE CLEANSE TIME. Block out time in your schedule for a cleanse. It could be a Saturday morning, an hour after work, or a whole day. Do what works best for you. Dedicating time to a cleanse reminds you of the importance of your decluttering goal and motivates you to follow through.

PREPARE YOURSELF. Dress in casual clothes, keep your favorite snack nearby, and play your favorite playlist. You'll work best when you're comfortable.

GATHER SUPPLIES. Have the following items ready for each cleanse session:

- Markers, index cards, sticky notes, and clear packing tape to make quick labels
- Cardboard boxes and plastic bags to sort, store, and donate items
- Trash bags for items to throw away
- Scissors or a utility knife

WORK THE CLOCK. Set a timer for 20 minutes and complete as much as you can in one space or zone. Take a 5-minute break. If you have more to go and feel up to it, do another 20-minute session. If you're tired, wrap it up. You can always return to a cleanse later.

TOUCH ONCE; DECIDE ONCE. Trust your instinct when deciding what to do with an item. Simply picking up or touching an item and asking, "Should I keep this?" will often yield your answer. Need additional questions? Try the four classics on *page 5*.

KEEP MOVING. When you don't quickly know whether to keep or get rid of an item, place it in a "return to" pile and revisit at the end of a session. If you're still unsure, put the item in a "maybe" box. Keep the box for three months. If you don't use the item during that allotted time, you can let go of it.

KNOW THE FOUR FINAL OPTIONS. When it's time to get items out of your home, you have four main options. You can either sell it, give it away, donate it, or recycle/dispose of it. See *page 9* for more details.

FOLLOW THROUGH. After you decide what to do with an item, carry out that decision immediately. If you're donating a box of clothes, put it in your car and mark time on your calendar to drop it off at the donation center. If you're gifting an item, set a reminder in your phone to bring it with you the next time you'll see the recipient.

REMEMBER REWARDS. Do something positive at the end of each session. A piece of candy, a beverage, or an actual pat on your back (or someone else's) reinforces your efforts.

FOUR CLARIFYING QUESTIONS

Power through clutter by asking yourself these four questions. For any item you want to keep, you should be able to answer "yes" to as many of the following queries as possible.

1

DO I LOVE IT?

KEEP ANYTHING YOU TRULY LOVE. IF YOU PICK UP AN ITEM AND YOUR HEART ACHES FROM THE IDEA OF PARTING WITH IT, YOU'LL REGRET GIVING IT AWAY. BUT BE AWARE THAT LOVING THE *IDEA* OF SOMETHING (THOSE CUTE JEANS THAT MIGHT FIT SOMEDAY) ISN'T TRUE LOVE.

TWO

DO I USE IT?

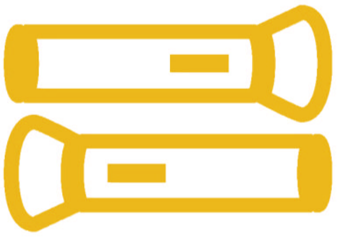
AND, IF SO, HOW OFTEN? KEEP ANYTHING YOU USE—AND START STORING THE STUFF YOU USE MORE FREQUENTLY IN THE EASIEST PLACES TO ACCESS.

FAVORITE
STUFF THIS WAY

3

DO I NEED MORE THAN ONE?

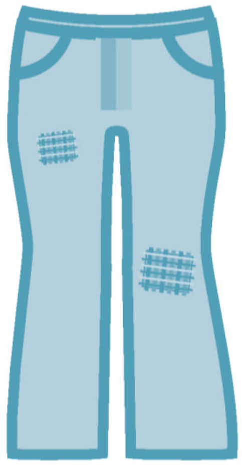
Edit down duplicates to the best version. Of course, multiple flashlights make sense when you keep them in different, useful places. Two waffle irons, however, is hard to justify.



FOUR

IS IT RARE OR IRREPLACEABLE?

If you suddenly need an item or it comes back in style, you can usually buy or borrow it quickly. So feel free to let go of things you can purchase again in less than 20 minutes or for less than $20.



1

CHALLENGE ONE

The Clutter You Can See

Clutter is an eyesore, so focus first on the messes that are right in front of you, targeting these four hot spots.

KITCHEN COUNTERS

Start with catchall spots. Recycle open mail and toss trash. Move non-kitchen items like sticky notes, markers, and tools to appropriate areas.

Review small appliances and keep ones you use daily within reach. Stash the rest and consider getting rid of a few.

Audit bulky countertop classics, such as spice racks, canister sets, and wine racks. If you don't use them daily, store them in a cabinet or pantry.

Hang utensils from a towel bar with S hooks, which frees up counter space.

ENTRY

Give everyone this quota: one jacket, two pairs of shoes, one hat. If you go over this limit, it's time to edit down.

Remove off-season items. If you aren't using your winter jacket or your beach bag, store it away.

Create a drop zone. Make it a habit to place daily-use items like your keys, wallet, and dog leash in the same spot every time.

Set up baskets for frequent tasks, such as pet care, school, and specific sports.

BATHROOM COUNTERS

Give the items you use every morning and night an easy-to-access spot like a medicine cabinet, wall hooks, or a shelf. Put away everything else in cabinets.

Get rid of grooming products that didn't work or don't feel good to you. Combine duplicates into one container.

Limit the number of soap, lotion, and perfume bottles you display. Finish what you have before adding more to your collection.

Employ clear caddies for daily supplies rather than spreading out toiletries every time you get ready.

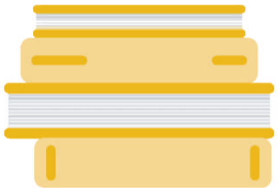
DESK

Ditch outdated work, such as first drafts, files older than 12 months, and documents with electronic or online equivalents.

Use a single box for excess office supplies and keep a second box for electronics. Shop these boxes first when you need items.

Test all writing utensils and keep only two or three pens on your desktop. Toss the ones that don't work.

Invest in desk organizers that match your specific work needs.



SKIP THE SETS
A prepackaged set may seem like a bargain, but if you use only one or two items in the set, you're actually spending more money and bringing more clutter into your home.

ESTABLISH LIMITS Professional organizer Jamie Novak (*jamienovak.com*) recommends a simple habit to bust clutter: set boundaries. For example, if your book collection is out of control, limit yourself to one shelf. To get a new book, you have to remove one. Other useful, naturally occurring boundaries include a specific drawer, a clothing rod, a strategically placed hook, or a designated basket or bin.

CHALLENGE TWO

The Clutter You Know Exists

Although this clutter is out of sight, it's not out of mind. Use this guide to clear up common hiding spots.

KITCHEN CABINETS

Get rid of cookware that's warped, dented, or that doesn't fit well in your stove. If you have duplicates, keep only the amount that can fit in your stove at one time.

Focus on multipurpose tools and donate or gift single-purpose gadgets.

Discard food storage containers that are stained or warped, as well as lonely lids. Keep enough stackable containers to hold at least a week's worth of leftovers.

Edit glassware. Extra bowls and plates are fine, but try for one daily-use glass per person.

UNDER THE SINK

Toss expired cleaners, as well as grungy sponges and brushes. Visit the site *earth911.com* to find guidelines for chemical recycling/disposal in your area.

Gift or donate products that don't work well in your home, that you don't like the smell of, or that you have extras of.

Opt for vertical organizers, which maximize storage, visibility, and accessibility. Gather floppy items like plastic grocery bags, rags, and cleaning gloves into clear bins.

KIDS PLAY AREA

Remove toys that are out of your children's age range and skill level, as well as any that are missing pieces, broken, or collecting dust.

Place toys you don't think your kids use anymore in a box. If they don't ask for them in the next six months, it's safe to donate or give them away.

Create systems your kids can use with ease. Think open bins on the floor or low shelves.

Rotate kid artwork. Swap in new pieces so the display never feels crowded. Store old art in a document box, or take a picture of child artwork and then discard the piece.

CLOSET

Toss all items with worn-out elastic, rips, missing elements, or stains.

Flip how your hangers are positioned. Each time you wear a garment, hang it the normal way. After six months, get rid of everything you haven't worn.

Shift off-season items into labeled bins. Stash bins on the top shelf, a bottom drawer, or under the bed.

Dedicate one accessible spot to accessories. Attach hooks or wall pockets to your closet door or wall to hang hats, belts, or bags.

3

CHALLENGE THREE

The Clutter You've Forgotten About

Under the bed or in the bottom of a bin, forgotten clutter takes up precious storage space. Here's how to get it back.

UNDER THE BED

Toss the easy stuff. Just get rid of lonely socks, empty packages, and wrinkled papers.

Establish a memory spot for mementos. But limit yourself to one under-the-bed bin.

If you find items under your bed that you forgot you had, it's probably time to donate, give away, or toss.

Give underbed storage containers a single purpose. Designate a bin for organizing seasonal clothes, crafting tools, and other items you don't use often but would like to keep.

OFF-SEASON STORAGE

Donate or gift supplies for hobbies you've lost interest in. Toss projects you haven't gotten around to in the last 12 months.

Stop saving baby clothes and toys for a younger sibling or cousin. Give, use, or donate them today. It's not worth the space, and you'll probably forget you even saved the items.

Wait to declutter sentimental items like mementos, photos, collectibles, and antiques until you have time to contemplate what you truly want to keep.

Ditch broken seasonal decor and items that are complicated to set up.

GARAGE STORAGE

Unblock walkways first. Move important items to accessible storage spots and toss junk.

Donate or gift recreational items that you've lost interest in, that you've replaced with newer versions, or that don't fit. Dispose of recreational items that are broken.

Edit down duplicate yard, carpentry, and household tools.

Install adjustable storage systems like pegboard or slat wall that can be updated easily as needs change. Use overhead racks and hooks for bulky items like bikes.

LINEN CLOSET

Get rid of linens that are ragged, stained, or feel worn down. You can use these as cleaning rags or donate them to an animal shelter.

Edit down to two sets of sheets for each bed in your home. For children under 10, keep four sets. Donate or give away linens that don't fit properly.

Label shelves and carve out spots for bed sheets, towels, and blankets.

Make kits for each category—first aid, surplus toiletries, spa day—and assign a bin and shelf in the closet for each.

WHAT TO DO AFTER THE CLEANSE

Congratulations! You've asked the tough questions and done the physical work of decluttering. Now it's time to follow through and get the piles of unwanted stuff out of your home.

Your options are to sell, give away, donate, or recycle/dispose. Depending on your location, your options and services may vary, but we've got resources to help you find a solution.

ONE

SELL IT

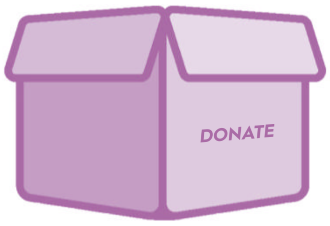
Your first notion may be to host a garage sale or sell your stuff on Craigslist or eBay. Wait just a second! Do you truly have the time and energy to sell things in the next week? If not, move on to other options. After a successful cleanse, you don't want a spare room filled with things you'll sell someday.

2

GIVE IT AWAY

If you know of someone specific who can use an item, contact him or her immediately.

Do not keep things because you're sure someone, somewhere will want the item someday. If you don't know of a specific person now, move on to other options. Consider free exchange networks. For example, The Freecycle Network (*freecycle.org*) has hundreds of grassroots, nonprofit groups around the world. Each local group is moderated online by local volunteers, and membership is free. The network provides individuals and nonprofits an electronic forum to "recycle" unwanted items. Simply send an email offering an item to members of your local Freecycle group.



3

DONATE IT

Most national donation-accepting organizations and charities (such as Goodwill, Salvation Army, St. Vincent De Paul, and others) are interested only in items that are new, unused, or in excellent condition. If you don't have any use for a beaten-up armchair or a broken stove, the charity probably won't either. Visit *charitynavigator.org* for detailed evaluations of thousands of charities in the United States and abroad. You'll also find links to charities in your area and info on how donating affects your taxes.

FAST & EASY

You don't even have to leave your home to declutter. Visit *donationtown.org* to find local charities that will pick up your donations and supply you with all the relevant tax paperwork.

FOUR

RECYCLE OR DISPOSE OF IT

If you can't find a person, organization, or charity that can use your item, it's time to (ideally) recycle the item or dispose of it. Visit *earth911.com* to find your best options for recycling or disposing of items. Simply enter the items you're getting rid of and your ZIP code; the site lists your options based on proximity to your home. Contact information is available for most options so you can find out what you need to do to drop off your stuff or arrange for a pickup.

STOP CLUTTER EARLIER

New habits can minimize the amount of clutter you generate going forward.

SORT BEFORE ENTERING

Place bins for trash, recycling, and donations near the door to stop clutter from ever entering your home.

START THE 60-SECOND TIDY

Before eating, sleeping, or watching TV, set your phone for one minute and try to put away as many items as possible.

SHOP SMARTER

Look for companies that encourage refills or replacements. Try brands that work with TerraCycle (*terracycle.com*), a mail-based recycling service.

MAKE TIME FOR YOU
Getting organized is all about tweaking habits and discovering new efficiency tricks—helping you find more free time to do what you really want to do.

TAKE YOUR TIME

We all get 1,440 minutes each day. Here's how to use this magazine to make the most of yours.

WRITER **BRIAN KRAMER**
PHOTOGRAPHER **CARSON DOWNING**

IF YOU'RE LIKE MOST PEOPLE, you talk about time a lot, but much of what you're saying falls into just two categories: "I don't have time for that!" and "Where did the time go?" In order to get the most out of this issue, take a moment to dig deeper into both complaints.

GET REACQUAINTED WITH TIME When was the last time you wore a watch? Watched network television in half-hour blocks of entertainment? Looked at a calendar that summarized an entire month? Part of the reason you feel like you don't have enough time is because you're disconnected from time itself. Rediscover what 60 seconds or 10 minutes or an hour feels like by setting an old-school egg timer and carrying it with you for a day. If you find the ticking distracting—good! That's time making itself known to you.

TRACK YOURSELF
To start determining where your time goes, you need to learn how long specific activities take. Can you really make that recipe in 15 minutes? How much time do you spend completing your job's weekly status report? (It's probably not "just a few minutes" as you've been claiming for years.) Break out a stopwatch and a blank weekly time grid. The first tool will tell you how much time small actions require; the other, as you fill in the boxes, will show you how you spend your time over the course of days and weeks.

BREAKING IT DOWN

You can achieve a great deal in 10 or 20 minutes when you set up clear, right-sized goals. Here are four core strategies for what productivity experts often call chunking—subdividing a big project into several smaller tasks.

THINK SMALL YET MEANINGFUL

You probably can't organize your office in 10 minutes, or even an afternoon. But you can use the next 10 minutes to tackle the paper pile that's constantly toppling onto your keyboard. This one upgrade will make you feel better about working at your desk, saving you the headache and time drain of constantly fussing with a mound of papers. And then tomorrow you can take on another high-impact, quick activity.

FINISH SOMETHING

Stop rewriting the same to-do list! Take a hard look at complex items that never get done ("Paint the front door") and break them into achievable tasks ("Pick paint color," "Order paint," "Sand door," and so on). The satisfaction of marking off a task, even a small one, motivates you to keep going.

DELEGATE A PIECE OR TWO

A secondary benefit of chunking is that you now have a list of small duties that you can assign to others. Reframe the idea of delegating: Rather than dumping on someone else, you're asking for a specific bit of help because your child has an interest or your partner has a special skill. And because you're just assigning a task or two, you can give your helpers a vision of what needs to be accomplished. This doesn't have to be a big presentation, either. A simple statement like "If Thomas dusts and Kate puts away the Playstation, the family room will be ready for movie night" provides a game plan and motivation for your team.

THE POWER OF DONE

Finishing something, even a small something, positively affects your brain and body. Experiencing lots of little completions throughout the day is more useful and motivating than (maybe) experiencing a big finale at the end of the month. For a fun and science-based take on this approach, check out *Finish: Give Yourself the Gift of Done* by Jon Acuff.

HOW TO BE PRODUCTIVE

Francesco Cirillo developed the Pomodoro Technique as a college student and eventually made it the cornerstone of his consulting business. It's a go-to for productivity experts and it can help you get more done.

WORK FOR 25 MINUTES. Set a timer for 25. (Pomodoro takes its name from those cute tomato-shape timers.)

TAKE A BREAK FOR 5 MINUTES. Again set the timer to keep yourself on schedule. Tip: You need to physically get away from your work. Don't check email for 5 minutes.

REPEAT THREE MORE TIMES. You'll work a total of two hours with 20 minutes of breaks equally divided across the time. This is also known as one complete pomodoro.

TAKE A LONGER BREAK. Step away from your work, this time for 20 to 30 minutes. Let your mind, eyes, and body recharge. Don't nap, but if you truly take a break you will feel similarly refreshed.

DO ANOTHER POMODORO. Keep going! Work, rest, repeat—until you meet your goal for the day.

KEYS TO SUCCESS

We've packed this issue with dozens of life-improving ideas that take between 2 to 60 minutes so you can start experiencing success quickly. The secret, however, to long-term and lasting improvement comes from combining many smaller pieces into a comprehensive plan for organized living.

SEQUENCE MATTERS

Doing things in a specific order can save time. This is why you dust before vacuuming a room. Whenever you find yourself deleting, replacing, or redoing something, take a look at your steps. The problem might not be that you're doing it wrong, but that you're doing it in the wrong order. Double-check your process by pretending to write instructions or teach a class of eager newbies.

MINIMIZE MOVEMENT

Pay attention to your actions and see how many times you move along the same path, pick up the same item, or open the same digital file. Repetition signals that you might be wasting time. Look for ways to automate steps—or combine two steps into one.

BUILD IN HOOKS

Productivity experts love to talk about hooks, which are actions that lead you seamlessly from Task A to Task B and so on. Hooks are often super simple behavior changes that propel better action. For example, as you slip out of bed in the morning, flip the blanket into place. With one movement, you're on your feet and your bed is already made.

GET IN THE HABIT

How many times do you have to do something before it becomes a habit? The real answer is, it depends. In *The Power of Habit,* author Charles Duhigg reports it can take anywhere from 18 to 254 days to form a new habit, with an average of 66 days for a new behavior to become set. So be gentle with yourself and take the long view of getting organized. Keep going little by little until you reach (often by surprise) a lot.

KIKKERLAND

GREEN CLOCK PHOTO, *OPPOSITE:* BLAINE MOATS

4 *time* TRUTHS

People have been pondering time since, well, the beginning of time itself. Here are four principles that can guide how you use your minutes.

1 DECISIONS TAKE TIME

Figuring out what to wear each day, for example, consumes time and brain power. Make decisions early (set out your outfit the night before) or reduce options (a capsule work wardrobe) to speed up getting dressed.

2 YOUR BRAIN NEEDS SOME FREE TIME

Yes, daydreaming serves a real biological purpose! When you let your brain take a break from hard-core analysis, its cells rebuild and revive. You may worry that your mind is starting to wander, but it's actually recalling the day and shuffling around all the things you experienced. These are great moments for creative thinking and surprise solutions. So let your mind go—every day.

3 WE ARE TERRIBLE AT ESTIMATING TIME

Like most people, you probably both under- and overestimate how long tasks will take. Productivity expert Julie Morgenstern says the way to become a better estimator is to practice. On paper, create a three-column grid. In column one, list several frequent tasks. In column two, write down your best time estimate. Do the tasks, time yourself, and write the results in column three. Then compare the numbers. Use the patterns to make more-accurate estimates going forward.

4 MULTITASKING IS A MYTH

Your brain can't do two things at the same time. It can switch back and forth almost instantly between two activities, but it's still doing only one thing at a time. Furthermore, brain-flipping doesn't save you any time and can actually wear you down faster. Try to monotask—do one task and finish it—for three or four hours and see how you feel about your progress.

WHAT TO BUY

IT'S ABOUT TIME

Stay on top of busy schedules with these fresh takes on classic time-management products that get the family on the same page and maximize your workday.

WRITERS **BETH ESLINGER** AND **MEGAN BOETTCHER**

CALENDARS

An easy-to-follow schedule starts with making the most of your calendar. Use it to establish routines, identify conflicts, and prioritize tasks.

BRILLIANT WEEKLY SCHEDULER
simply on my desk
1

January
2023
Sunday
Monday
Tuesday
Wednesday
Thursday
Friday
Saturday
2

This Week
mon
11
Brunch @12pm
meeting with Serah
Dry cleaning pick up
tue
12
wed
13
Haircut appt. @3pm
Dinner with Nancy
thu
14
Clean Windows!
fri
15
sat
16
call Sandy
807-765-2009
sun
17
shopping list!
- carrots
- tuna
- milk
- garlic bread
- salt
3

Use markers to color code activities by type or person.

1 ON-THE-GO SCHEDULE

With 60 weeks worth of pages included, this portable calendar will become your to-go list for appointments, events, etc. It comes with a stand so you can prop it on your desk too. Paperian Brilliant Weekly Scheduler, $11; *amazon.com*

2 CUSTOMIZABLE CALENDAR

Every member of the house can have their own custom calendar with this affordable download. Place it in a binder, attach to a clipboard, or laminate. 2023 Printable Calendar, $3; *etsy.com/shop/populier*

3 CHALKBOARD DECAL

See your week at a glance with a 33×26-inch vinyl chalkboard sheet, which can attach to most surfaces. It also comes with the "This Week" vinyl letters. Weekly Chalkboard Calendar Decal, $54; *simpleshapes.com*

4 DESKTOP PAD

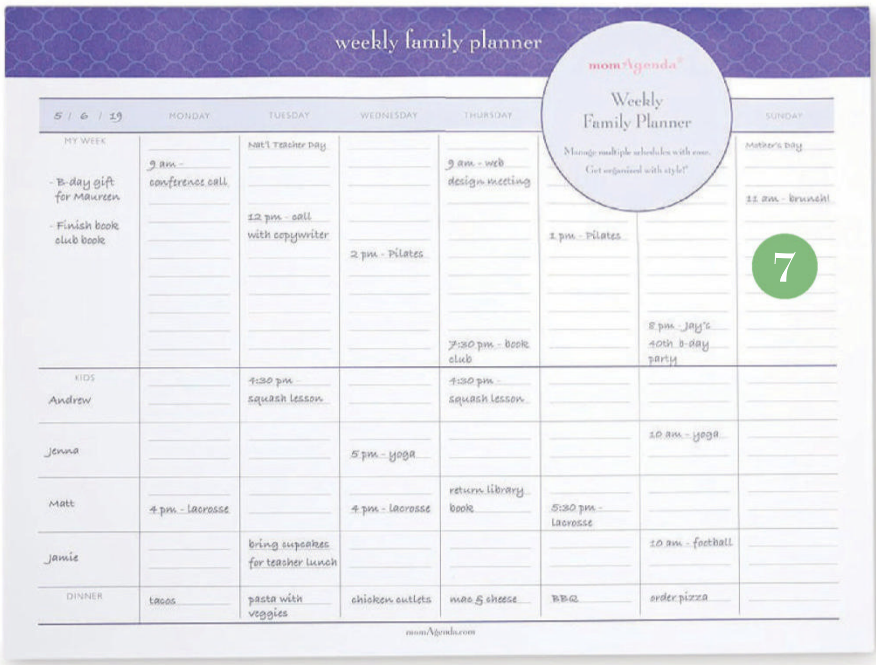
This supersize calendar (22×17 inches) comes with 36 blank calendar sheets for up to three years of use. Pin it on a bulletin board or place on a desk blotter to keep your monthly schedule handy. Desktop Month Pad, $28; *russellandhazel.com*

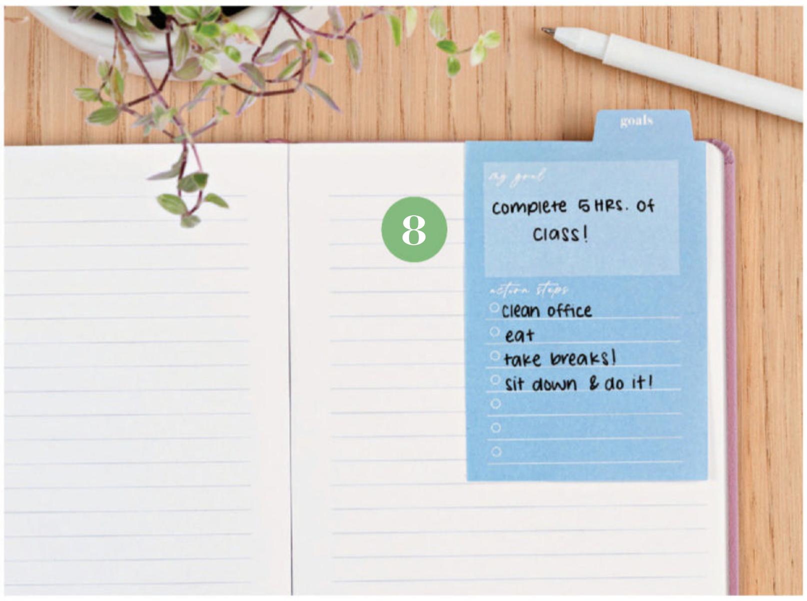
PLANNERS

Stop forgetting important appointments with these old-school tools. Physically writing down your deadlines and must-dos on paper boosts your likelihood of remembering.

ACADEMIC PLANNER
22
23
5

Use washi tape to mark the edges of important pages.


weekly family planner
momAgenda
Weekly Family Planner
7


goals
complete 5 HRS. of class!
clean office
eat
take breaks!
sit down & do it!
8

5 STUDENT PLANNER

Day planners help kids take control of their schedules. This one has a durable vinyl cover and a page that teaches kids how to use it. Stickers help kids flag important stuff. Academic Planner, $17; *products .orderoochaos.com*

6 BULLET JOURNAL

Premade templates help you get started with bullet journaling. It comes with 12 monthly and 60 weekly spreads, plus a ton of extra blank pages. Cloudberry Bullet Journal, $34; *cloudberryjournals.com*

7 FAMILY SCHEDULE

Help your household get organized with this handy grid featuring space for parents and up to four children. Stick it on the fridge so everyone can see the week's plans. MomAgenda Weekly Family Planner, $19; *momagenda.com*

8 GOAL-SETTING HELP

This 20-sheet set of sticky notes helps you make an action plan to achieve your daily goals. Tack them onto the page of a daily planner to manage your to-do list. Goal Setting Tabbed Sticky Notes, $4.50; *erincondren.com*

TIMERS

Set a timer and miracles happen. Use one to help you stay focused and limit how long to spend on a task, then check off a goal when the time is up.

9
TIME TIMER
120 MIN
0
10
20
30
40
50
60
70
80
90
100
110

Give kids a visual cue about how much time has passed.

12
Baseus
M
S
05:00

9 VISUAL REMINDER

Recommended for those with autism or ADHD, this timer physically shows time passing. Turn the dial and see the time increment turn to color. The timer also comes in shorter increments versions. Time Timer, $41; *timetimer.com*

10 CHIC HOURGLASS

This stylish timer, available in denim blue or terra-cotta orange, empties in 30 minutes. Use it to limit social media time or to extend the time kids are practicing the piano or reading a book. 30-Minute Hourglass Timer, $30; *containerstore.com*

11 KITCHEN TIMER

Tuck this 2×4-inch timer on a shelf, windowsill, or countertop. It's easy to use—just turn the bottom to the desired time and the device will ding when it's done. It marks up to an hour and comes in four chic colors. Minimalist Danish Kitchen Timer, $34; *food52.com*

12 DIGITAL CHOICE

With a magnetic backing, this digital timer is a versatile choice. Rotate to set the time, press start, and begin your activity. Use it as a stopwatch or a fitness assist for holding yoga poses. Baseus Countdown Timer, $25; *amazon.com*

PHOTOGRAPHER: TY MECHAM/FOOD 52 (KITCHEN TIMERS)

WATCHES AND CLOCKS

Use timepieces more effectively to help you set deadlines and track the passing day. Analog versions visually tick off the minutes while digital versions can be programmed to remind you of appointments.

13
GARMIN
Let's get coffee this morning!

Choose from three watch faces and multiple band colors.

13 SPORT WATCH

Get all the popular smart watch health and fitness features with the look of a traditional analog watch. Ticking hands move away to reveal a hidden touchscreen display. Garmin Vivomove Sport, from $179; *garmin.com*

14 UPDATED PERSONAL ASSISTANT

The fifth-generation smart speaker with a clock tees up Alexa to set an alarm, turn on lights, phone a friend, play tunes, or read the news. Amazon Echo Dot with Clock, $50; *amazon.com*

15 SMART TOOL

This watch tracks sleep, monitors stress levels, and watches your heart rate. It's an exercise tool, too, with automatic tracking for popular activities. Samsung Galaxy Watch5, from $95; *samsung.com*

16 ANALOG CLOCK

Quiet but telling, this tick-free 10-inch clock won't keep your kids up at night. To help kids learn how to read an analog clock, search for educational worksheets online. Available in multiple colors. Hirto Silent Kids Wall Clock, from $10; *amazon.com*

MAKE THE MOST OF YOUR DAY

Productivity experts share tips to help you stay focused, organize your time, and get more tasks checked off your to-do list.

WRITER **RENEE FREEMON MULVIHILL** ILLUSTRATOR **TRINA DALZIEL**

I FEEL OVERWHELMED AND CAN'T SEEM TO GET THINGS DONE. WHAT CAN I DO?

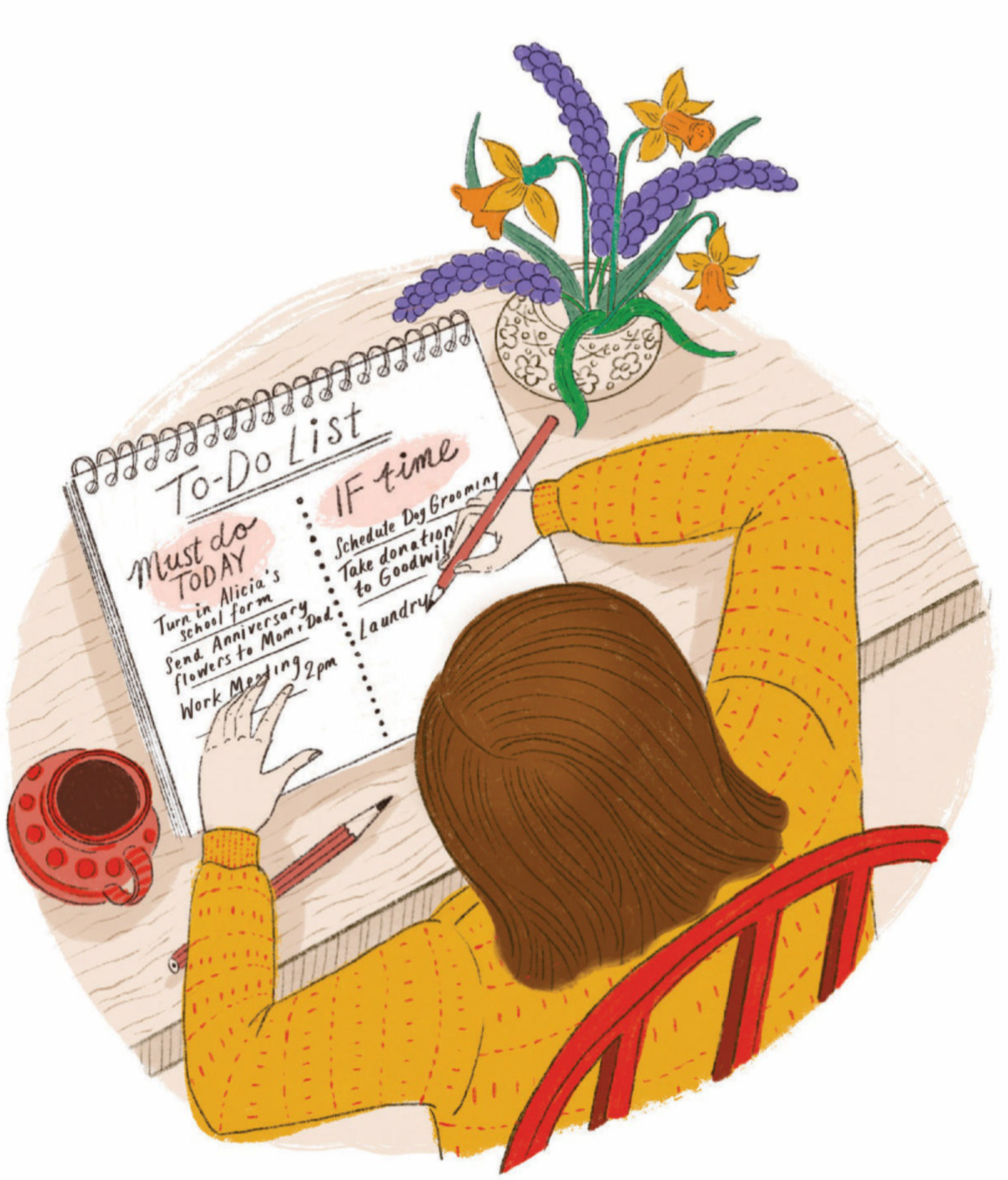
WENDY BUGLIO It's important to have some compassion for yourself and acknowledge there's a lot getting in the way of our ability to be productive, and it's not all in our control. Communicate when you're feeling overwhelmed and be willing to take a step back.

JAMIE STEELE I think we need to reframe how we look at our to-do list. It is a living document and things are never going to all be done. Once we relax into that, we remove some of the stress.

HELENE SEGURA Try to rejoice in having this never-ending to-do list because it means you have a full life. And give yourself permission to not do everything today.

RACHEL FONTAINE Planning your time is about being intentional about how you're going to spend it. What do you value? If your value is spending time with your family, then what you do during the day is going to be different than if you value your work more.

JAMIE STEELE Productivity is really individualized. What motivates me might not motivate you. Experiment with different techniques to find what works for you.


To-Do List
Must do TODAY
Turn in Alicia's School form
Send Anniversary flowers to Mom + Dad
Work Meeting 2pm
IF time
Schedule Dog Grooming
Take donation to Goodwill
Laundry

WHAT SHOULD I DO FIRST? EVERYTHING SEEMS IMPORTANT!

KATHY VINES While everything may feel important, they probably don't all feel EQUALLY as important. What is the differentiator? Urgency? Letting someone else down? Missing out on an important opportunity? What matters most to you?

WENDY BUGLIO There's a tried and true principle called the Eisenhower principle. You look at what's important and urgent and make a grid. Some things may be important but not urgent. Later, they may become urgent and rise to the top of your list.

RACHEL FONTAINE Just get started. A lot of people get frozen trying to figure out what to do first, but it becomes a stall tactic. It's not as important as we think.

HOW MUCH SHOULD I PUT ON MY TO-DO LIST? WHEN SHOULD I MAKE MY LIST?

WENDY BUGLIO A to-do list is critical and it can be paper-based or in an app. Just be sure you only have one to-do list and not five or it's hard to figure out what rises to the top.

JAMIE STEELE I like to encourage people to sit down on a weekly basis and plan the week ahead. Then I like to coach people to review their plan the night before—so on Monday you review Tuesday, and so on.

KATHY VINES I'm a fan of the "brain dump" process to get everything out of my head and into a list. I tend to have a clearer brain and energy to do that mid-morning. But that's me! Know when YOU have a solid and reliable brain to access the things that are swirling around in it. That may be first thing in the morning for you, or it may be right before bedtime.

HELENE SEGURA Pause at the end of each day to create your "three plus three" for the next day. This means you choose three specific tasks that you know you want to work on the next day because they are important to you or there is a deadline. If you finish the first three, your plus three becomes your bonus three. Often there is some sort of hiccup with your top three and we tend to get derailed and flustered and end up not accomplishing much. But now you can just move on to your plus three.

KATHY VINES Make sure at the start of every day you know what the three most important things to do or accomplish that day are. Then focus on getting those things done. You'll know you've carved out the time and energy to focus on a small but manageable and impactful list.

WENDY BUGLIO Your top three things could be on sticky notes on your computer or on the visor in your car. Partway through the day, check in with yourself and consider whether you have done those three things yet.

OUR EXPERTS

WENDY BUGLIO, professional organizer; Arlington, Massachusetts

RACHEL FONTAINE, professional organizer, Fontaine Organizing; Rhode Island

HELENE SEGURA, time management expert, LivingOrder San Antonio

JAMIE STEELE, productivity specialist, Tidy Your Time; Austin

KATHY VINES, professional organizer, Clever Girl Organizing; Melrose, Massachusetts

Please see "Meet the Pros," *page 90,* for contact information.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT TO SET GOALS? HOW CAN THEY HELP ME BECOME MORE FOCUSED?

RACHEL FONTAINE If you don't know where you're going, you have no idea how to get there. First figure out your values and then figure out which goals tie into those values.

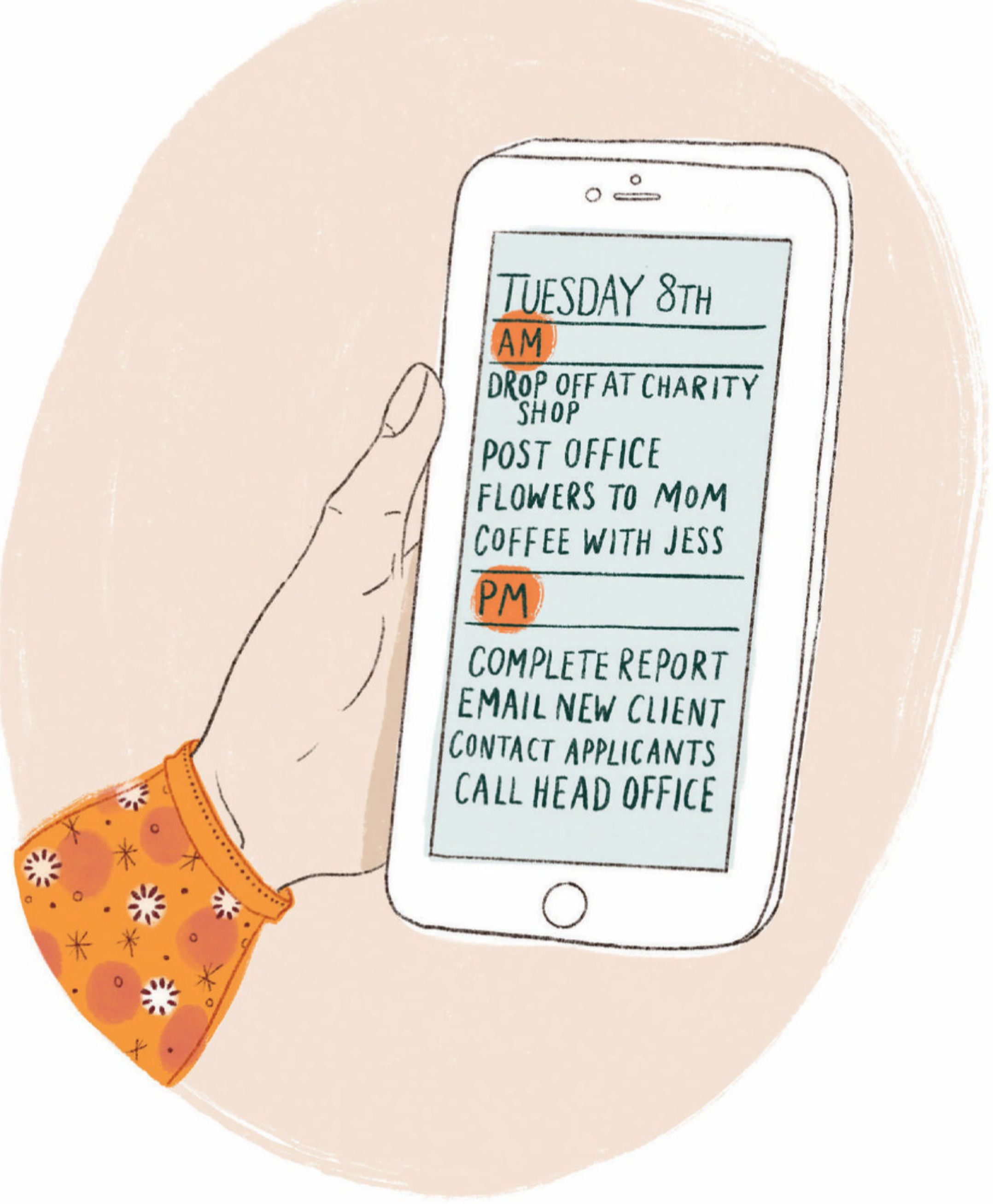
JAMIE STEELE Goals give you something to focus your energy on. When you don't have goals, your world of possibilities is so open that it can be overwhelming. Goals direct your attention and give you your task list. A lot of my clients feel kind of aimless until they have something bigger to focus on.

KATHY VINES Some people are goal-oriented. Achieving a goal is a reward for them. But even if you're not specifically goal-oriented, goals are still an effective tool in being productive. They can help guide your choices around how you use your time and energy to move toward a stated destination.

HELENE SEGURA Goals can help with time management because when we stay focused on all these lists of things to do, we tend to lose sight of the big picture. And when we lose sight of that, we tend to not use our time as effectively. You can set up an Excel spreadsheet that lists your goals and the steps you need to get there, or you can add it to your calendar as a series of appointments and reminders. Some people might want to set up a vision board with one picture or multiple pictures that represent the goal they are trying to achieve.

JAMIE STEELE I recommend having no more than three or four goals at a time. One might be a house renovation project and the other might just be getting the kids out the door on time. You can also have an overarching goal and then break it down into smaller bits.

KATHY VINES When your goals are clearly defined and reasonably achievable, they can be a beacon that drives your choices, your effort, your focus, and your ability to reach a desired end point.



HOW CAN I USE THE TIME IN MY DAY MORE EFFECTIVELY? ARE THERE WAYS TO GET MORE DONE IN LESS TIME?

WENDY BUGLIO Start by considering what your best focus time is. Are you better in the morning, afternoon, or evening? Or maybe there is a time of day when everyone is out of the house and you have a couple hours free. Don't give that time away for just anything. Save it for the things that require a lot of focus.

JAMIE STEELE If it's a time of day where you are high energy, you may not want to sit at a desk and fill out paperwork. That might be a good time for interacting with people and running errands.

KATHY VINES Batching your work can help amplify your productivity. Group together similar activities that require the same kind of attention and tools so you can be more efficient. One example is paying the bills. If you pay one at a time, you have a whole ramp-up-and-wrap-up process for one bill. If you're doing 10 bills, you only ramp-up-and-wrap-up once.

HELENE SEGURA Try ghost tasking. Run something in the background while working on something in the foreground. You might throw in a load of laundry while you are washing the dishes or prepping dinner.

RACHEL FONTAINE Give your full attention to the thing you are doing and you will be much more effective. Our brains can't focus on more than one thing at a time; you are actually switching your focus back and forth between two things. This drags your brain down so it's not functioning at the level you want it to.

WHAT ARE SOME THINGS THAT STEAL TIME FROM OUR DAYS?

KATHY VINES The obvious answer is that rectangular thing you hold in your hand that you think is critical to your life: your phone! You think you'll spend "just 5 more minutes" scrolling through social media or playing a game, and no one is more surprised than you when that 5 minutes turns into 27 and you lost the buffer time before your next task.

WENDY BUGLIO The biggest one is social media. You get into this Instagram and TikTok vortex, and time just goes by without you realizing it. Be aware of when that is taking over. Set a limit for social media and figure out when you will engage with it.

JAMIE STEELE You can set screen time limits for apps. There are also apps that will lock websites for you and not allow you to get to the apps and websites that are distracting you. Set up favorites so you can put your phone on Do Not Disturb but important people can still reach you.

WENDY BUGLIO We feel compelled to respond to texts or emails right away, but those are other people's priorities. You can turn notifications off for periods of time throughout the day so you can stay focused on what you want to accomplish.

HELENE SEGURA Be aware of self-interruptions. I call those time leaks, and they kind of drip throughout the day. We have time leaks from our random thoughts, fear of missing out, procrastination, and perfectionism that use a lot of time each day.

HOW CAN I USE MY CALENDAR TO KEEP ME ON TRACK?

KATHY VINES Block out time on your calendar and assign a task or activity to that window. An example would be to say that you're blocking a 2-hour window on Friday at 10 am to catch up on financial paperwork.

RACHEL FONTAINE Try not to schedule everything in every single spot on your calendar or you're bound to get stressed out when things don't go as planned.

HELENE SEGURA If you're using a digital calendar, set a reminder for 48 hours prior to an important event to remind you to get ready for whatever is scheduled on your calendar.

Do not DISTURB

APPS TO HELP YOU BE MORE PRODUCTIVE

TODOIST This easy-to-use task management and to-do list app can link to your calendar, send reminders for due dates or events, and assign tasks to others for important projects.

STRIDES Use this app to track your goals and build new habits. Seeing how many days you have reached your goal or incorporated your new habit will make you motivated to keep going.

FREEDOM Trying to limit distractions? This app allows you to block certain apps and websites on all your devices so you can stay focused and get more done.

BE REALISTIC

"You're setting yourself up for failure if you create an unfinishable list," productivity expert Helene Segura says. "A lot of folks underestimate the amount of time tasks take. If you struggle with this, listen to your gut feeling, then double that estimate."

PRO TIP

"Try an earlier wake-up time if you're rushing. By setting your alarm 15 to 20 minutes before your kids wake up, you're building a sense of calm into your day."

—BARBARA REICH,
PRODUCTIVITY EXPERT

JUMP-START A GOOD DAY

Make your mornings run smoother by sticking to a simple routine that divvies up responsibilities to everyone and keeps shared spaces organized.

WRITER **SAMANTHA S. THORPE**

1 REFRAME YOUR MORNING

Take a few moments to eat with your family and check on the day's schedule. "Mornings can be a good time to enjoy one another's company," time-management expert Laura Vanderkam says. "Family dinner may not happen if life after school or work is hectic, but family breakfast can happen. That's quality time together."

2 GIVE EVERYONE A SPACE

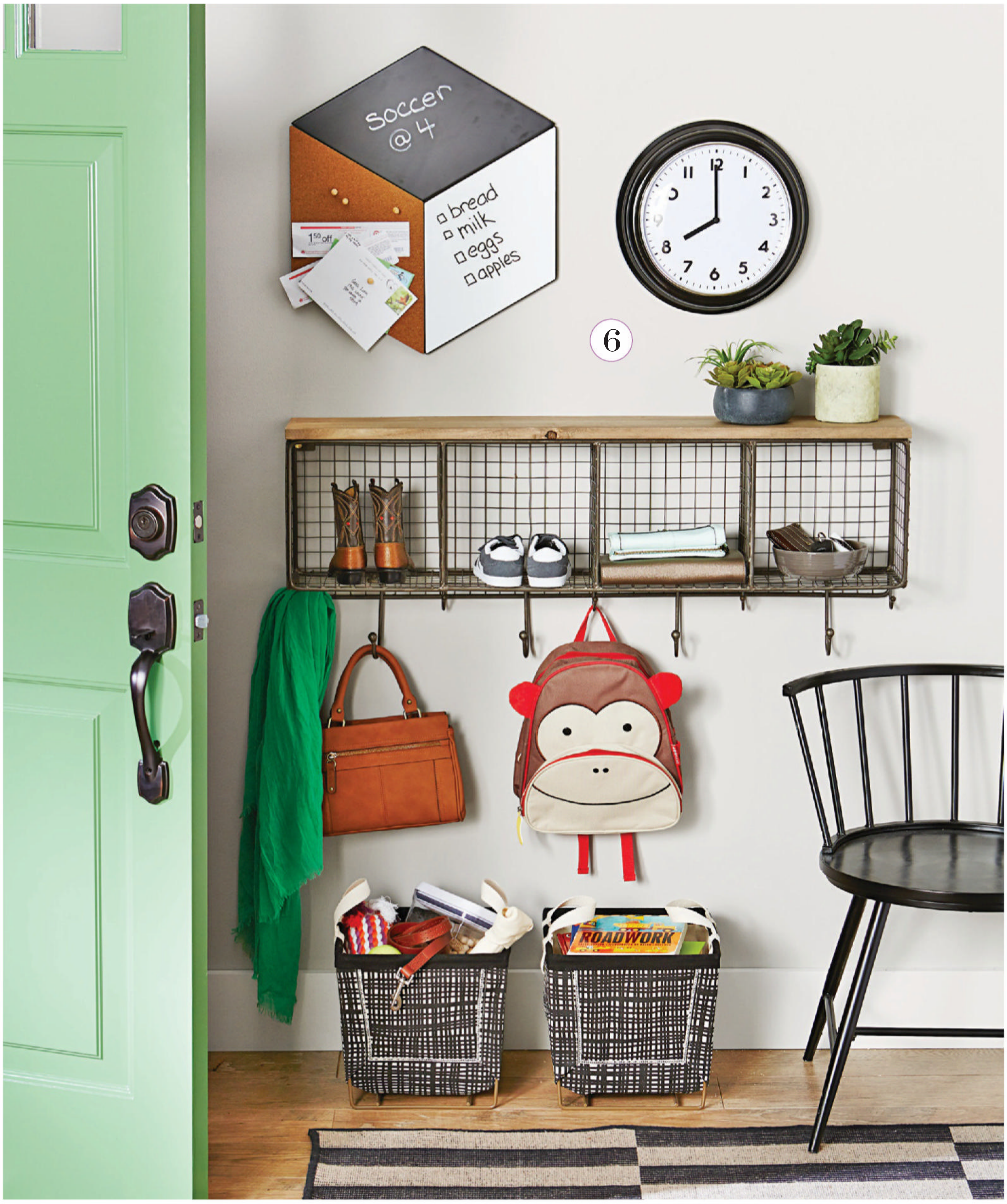
Whether it's a hook or a cubby, assign a place to hold each person's jacket, bag, gear, etc., so they can find and put away things quickly. "That spot remains sacred: Coats, backpacks, and shoes come off and stay there," Vanderkam says.

3 TURN IT INTO A GAME

Coaxing young kids to get dressed on their own—or even older kids to tie their shoes—can be a struggle. Have a timer ready and make it fun by saying, "Let's see how fast you can do it today!" Post personal bests on a memo board.

CLUTTER CURE

10 MINUTES Furry family members also come with gear to store. Install a hook by the door for a leash and use a basket for toys, treats, and cleanup bags.



4 RITUALIZE BREAKFAST

Buy the ingredients for your first-meal-of-the-day favorites, then rotate through them so you don't have to make too many choices.

5 TAKE A MOMENT

When things get off track, stop and take a deep breath. One minute of calm can actually speed things up, versus chanting, "Let's go! Let's go!" all morning long.

6 POST IMPORTANT NOTES

Have a place by the door where you can leave reminders and list appointments for the day. This is also a good place to pin mail that needs to be sent or responded to since it's a highly visible place.

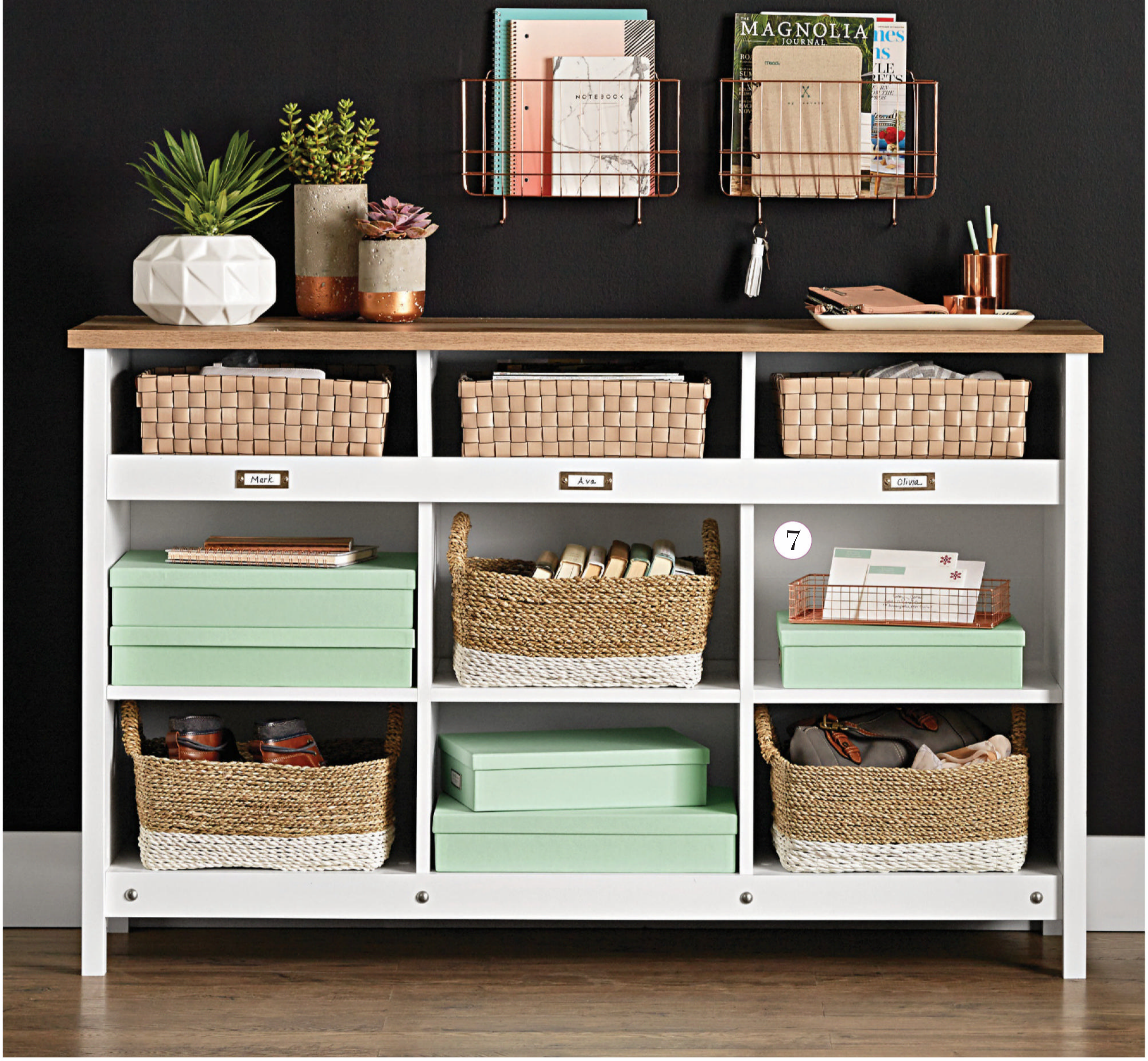
7 CREATE A DROP ZONE

Set up shared catchalls (trays for keys, sunglasses, and electronics) in an entryway. Assign a basket or bin for each family member, incoming mail, and must-return items like library books. Tidy quickly by tossing things into personal bins. Then set a house rule for how often to review their contents so you handle to-dos like signing paperwork and throwing away no-longer-needed items on a timely basis.

PRO TIP

"Schedule a declutter date on your calendar every few weeks to tackle any piles—from mail to shoes—that have formed by your entry."

—TONI HAMMERSLEY,
ORGANIZING AND
CLEANING EXPERT



ORGANIZE YOUR TECH

Invest the time to make your phone work for you—and not the other way around—so you're not frustrated or drained by it.

WRITER **STACEY FREED**

STREAMLINE YOUR PHONE

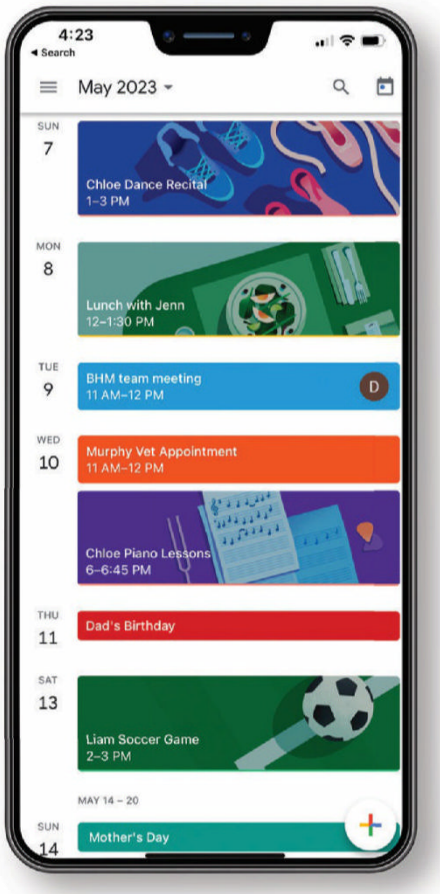
Smartphones are powerful tools, but they can also feel as if they're taking over your life. Learn how to leverage your phone's features and apps so you can use it effectively and efficiently.

REGAIN CONTROL IN THREE STEPS

1 **EVALUATE** Take a hard look at what is on your phone. Go through your apps—news, email, games, social media. Look at each one, weigh its functionality as well as whether using it makes you feel good or lousy. Delete liberally—you can always bring an app back.

2 **ORGANIZE YOUR HOME SCREEN** It's prime real estate. Reserve it for the practical apps and tools you require regularly throughout your day, or any that support habits you hope to build (such as daily meditation). Dedicate the dock or navigation bar to your absolute favorites.

3 **MAINTAIN** Keep your phone decluttered as you would your closet by regularly editing, says tech-wellness expert Carley Knobloch. Every month or two delete or recategorize apps or move them to the final page—the last-gasp position on your phone.



4:23
◂ Search
May 2023

SUN 7 Chloe Dance Recital 1–3 PM
MON 8 Lunch with Jenn 12–1:30 PM
TUE 9 BHM team meeting 11 AM–12 PM
WED 10 Murphy Vet Appointment 11 AM–12 PM
Chloe Piano Lessons 6–6:45 PM
THU 11 Dad's Birthday
SAT 13 Liam Soccer Game 2–3 PM
MAY 14 – 20
SUN 14 Mother's Day

> "I find that widgets simplify my life because I can see what I need more quickly and easily."
>
> **—JENNIFER STEWART, PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZER AND PRODUCTIVITY COACH**

TIME TOOL
Put Google Calendar to use, *left.* It's easy to use, free, available for iOS, and already installed on most Androids.

WIDGET WISE

Opt for apps that come with widgets—applications that display info on your home screen—such as a preview of today's tasks from your calendar—without opening the app.

PRO TIP

Simplify and protect your passwords with an app like Dashlane, which stores and manages passwords in a digital vault.

MAKE CONTACTS DO MORE

Include notes with your phone contacts for more effective searches. New restaurant? Add food type and location. For doctors, include their specialty and who referred you. Group together business clients. "This info will help you search by whatever way you might think of," professional organizer Barbara Reich says.

CATEGORIZE YOUR APPS

Making it easier to find things can save you time. Choose folder names that work best for the way you think—action, color, most frequently used, themes, etc.

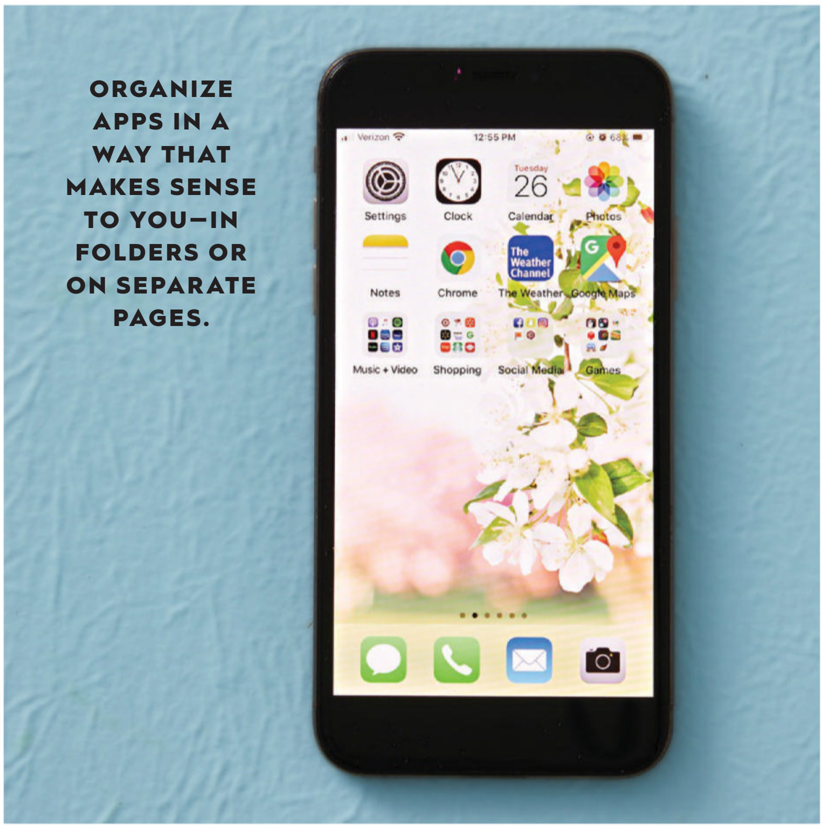
DEVICE DETOX

START HERE

1 **TURN IT DOWN** Notifications can make you crazy. Switch off all the beeping and blinking. According to UC Irvine study researcher Gloria Mark, it takes an average of 23 minutes and 15 seconds to get back on task after an alert.

2 **CLEAR VISUAL CLUTTER** Create category folders to organize apps. Leave apps you use daily unfoldered on your home screen. "The fewer clicks mean you can get to it faster," professional organizer Amy Payne says.

3 **APP EXCHANGE** Apply the same rules as if purging your clothes closet: If you haven't used it, lose it. And when you get a new app, remove an old one. (No worries if you want it back: When you delete on the phone, it's still in the Google Play Store or iTunes library.)



ORGANIZE APPS IN A WAY THAT MAKES SENSE TO YOU—IN FOLDERS OR ON SEPARATE PAGES.

PICKY, PICKY

Be clear on the functions you need an app to do before deciding. "Choose one that resonates and try it for two to three weeks," says professional organizer and productivity coach Jennifer Stewart.

FACTOR THIS

Every app has a learning curve. But if that multiplies your workload and the app won't make you more efficient, rethink it, says organizing expert Kate Martin.

FAMILY TASKS

Save your brain cells for the hard stuff. Let these apps remind you when to take action.

REMEMBER THE MILK

Get your to-do list out of your head. This app will sync on multiple devices and lets you share lists with others.

COZI

Keep events and activities in one place, share the grocery list in real time, store recipes, plan meals, and set up calendar reminders.

CLUTTER CURE

60 MINUTES Take some time to consolidate your contacts list. If you don't have thousands, do it manually. With multitudes, try a duplicate finder app like Contacts Cleanup Plus. You'll thank yourself next time you have to search for a contact.

PHONE PHOTO, *THIS PAGE*, JASON DONNELLY

MANAGE EMAILS

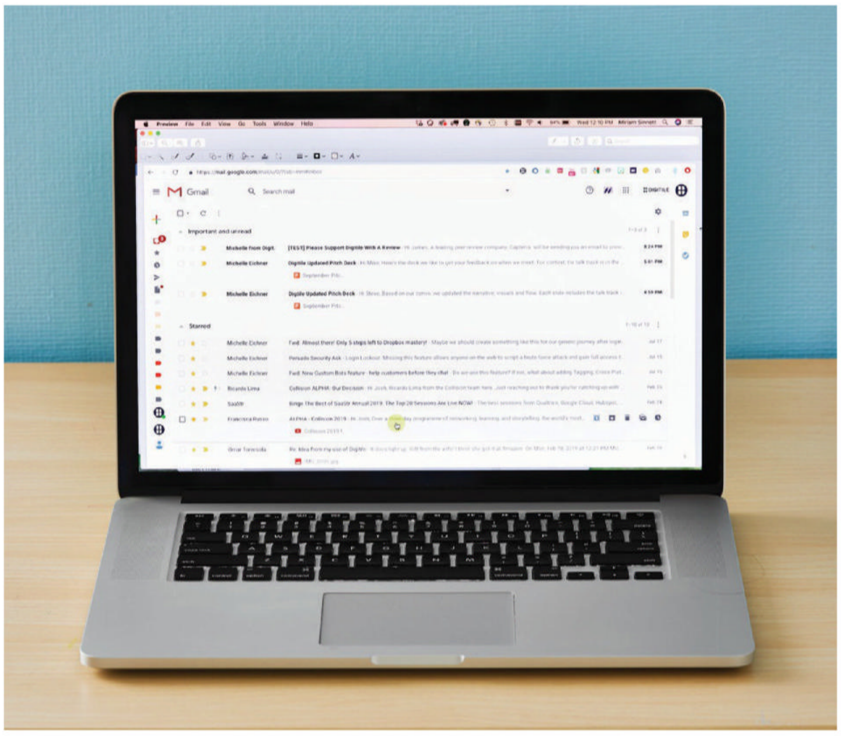
Constant and annoying as a dripping faucet, email can be a major time suck. Get on top of it by setting time parameters, determining priorities, making space, and automating tasks.

QUICK FIX

In less than 10 minutes, you can be free of those annoying reminders—visual and aural—that pop up every time a new email arrives. On a PC, go to "settings" then "notifications and actions" to turn them off. It's similar on a Mac.

READ WHEN READY

Triage email at a set time, and then don't look at it constantly. If you must be responsive to clients, set regular times to check in. "Turn it off when you're doing project work," professional organizer Ellen Faye says.



TAKE ACTION

Leave your inbox for actionable items and flag them or categorize them based on each email's importance. Then set up a time to go through them periodically. Some people like to keep 100 emails, some 25. Pick a number you can live with, but be sure to prioritize. Everything in your inbox can't be important. "Think FAT—File, Act, Toss. Be ruthless," Faye says.

SEARCH (ON YOUR) TERMS

Change the subject line to what makes sense to you so you don't have to look through every email in a conversation.

MULTIPLE ACCOUNTS

Use one email for nonurgent email like coupons or newsletters. Have a separate account for important personal items. Set up a third solely for work if needed.

CLUTTER CURE

30 MINUTES Unload inbox garbage once a month. If your Gmail is also coming into your Outlook, empty the trash in both places to free up space and increase speed.

MAKE IT SEAMLESS

"Automate as much as you can," professional organizer Jennifer Stewart says. Use tools that lessen the amount of time you spend repeating tasks with these steps:

1. SIMPLE

If you send out the same information often, create a template in Word so you can easily plug in updated details and send as an attachment.

2.INTERMEDIATE

Use "filters" or "rules" to sort email. For example, every time the PTA newsletter arrives, it automatically goes into a folder where you can read it later. "If you see you're not actually reading things, let them go," Stewart says.

3. MORE ADVANCED

Stewart suggests a tool like zapier.com, which helps you move between apps. You set a trigger like "a new email," which leads to one or more actions set by you, such as "copy the email attachment and put it in Dropbox."

TAKE CONTROL OF PHOTOS

We all love taking photos. Organizing them, not so much. Check out our tips for managing your photos so you're not overwhelmed by them.

STOP PIC OVERLOAD WITH A STORAGE PLAN

For the photos you decide to keep, develop a storage strategy. Research your cloud storage options and determine how you will back up your photos. Then set a monthly date in your calendar to move photos into your selected storage system.

> "In many newer photo programs you can search by what's in the image so you don't have to do as much organizing as you used to."
>
> —AMY PAYNE, PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZER

OUR TOP APPS

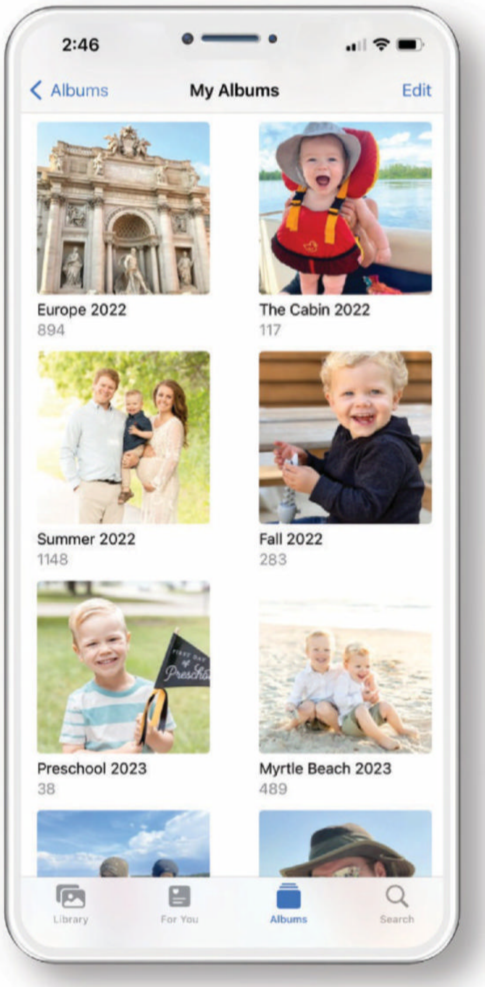
SMARTPHONE
Your cell has been organizing all along. Check out albums in your Google or Apple photos tab.

SLIDEBOX
Delete unwanted images. Organize albums quickly. Keep photos all in one place.

FLICKR
Online photo management app. Allows you to give consent to contacts to help organize.

SORTING PHOTOS INTO ALBUMS

If possible, delete photos you don't like on the day you take them, Reich says. Choose an album naming convention that's going to work for you. Reich creates "best of" albums—Best of Family, Best of Friends—and vacation albums based on locale.



ORGANIZE YOUR CORDS

Phones, computers, tablets, televisions—not to mention the appliances residing on the kitchen counter—all require power. Use these organizers to end cord chaos and charge up in style.

OMARI BAMBOO CHARGING STATION
Keeps four devices and their charging cords organized ($38). Fits neatly on your desk. *wayfair.com*

UT-WIRE CABLE STATION PRO
Label each slot and stick to the back of a desk for out-of-sight cord and cable control ($9). *ut-wire.com*

COMPUTER PHOTO, *OPPOSITE*, JASON DONNELLY.

ALL IN ONE SPOT
Group necessities in stylish bins to give your entryway a tidy look. This one holds books bound for the library, while another corrals pet gear for walks and outdoor play.

07
2023
July
SUNDAY
MONDAY
TUESDAY
WEDNESDAY
THURSDAY
FRIDAY
SATURDAY
Press PAUSE

STAND-UP SOLUTION
You can use office supply staples in the entryway too. Letter sorters hold up wallets and clutches so they're easy to grab on your way out the door.

ENTRY +LIVING

Create streamlined storage for family and pet gear so everyone can access essentials quickly.

32 Goal: Organize Pet Gear
34 Fast + Easy Fixes: Family Game Station
36 Easy Entries
42 Inside Story

RESOURCES BEGIN ON *PAGE 93.*

PRODUCER: KATE MALO; PHOTOGRAPHER: MARTY BALDWIN

> "If you have a hall closet, use a set of plastic drawers on the floor for rags, treats, and other dog stuff. Label each drawer so everyone can find what they need."
>
> **—RACHEL FONTAINE, PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZER**

GOAL

ORGANIZE PET GEAR

Simplify caring for your pets by including them in your daily agenda and carving out storage space for their gear.

WRITER **RACHEL O'BRIEN**

☑ **DESIGNATE A HOOK** by the door for hanging leashes, *opposite*. Set a regular time and route to walk each day so your dog knows how long it has to do its business. "If you're regimented with your pet, they will fall in line and you can time that," professional organizer Kathy Jenkins says.

☐ **CREATE A FOLDER** to help keep track of pet-related tasks. Give them their own color-coded folder for medical and grooming records and adoption papers. Set an ongoing reminder on your phone for their routine grooming times. Or download a printable pet planner ($6) at *confettisaturday.com.*

☐ **SET UP A TOY BOX** near the entry for your pet's favorite toys. First gather all of the toys and assess which ones are played with and which ones are too far gone. Purchase a bin large enough to hold the keepers, *below left.* If you want to control your pet's access to the toys, opt for a bin with a lid.

ANOTHER GREAT *IDEA*

If your family is running around to various activities in the evening, it can be hard to know whether the dog has been fed. Keep track of feeding and medications with this handy Did You Feed The Dog? Daily Feeding Reminder ($12). Simply switch the tab to green after you give your pet his meals or meds. Hang it directly above food bowls. ***chewy.com***

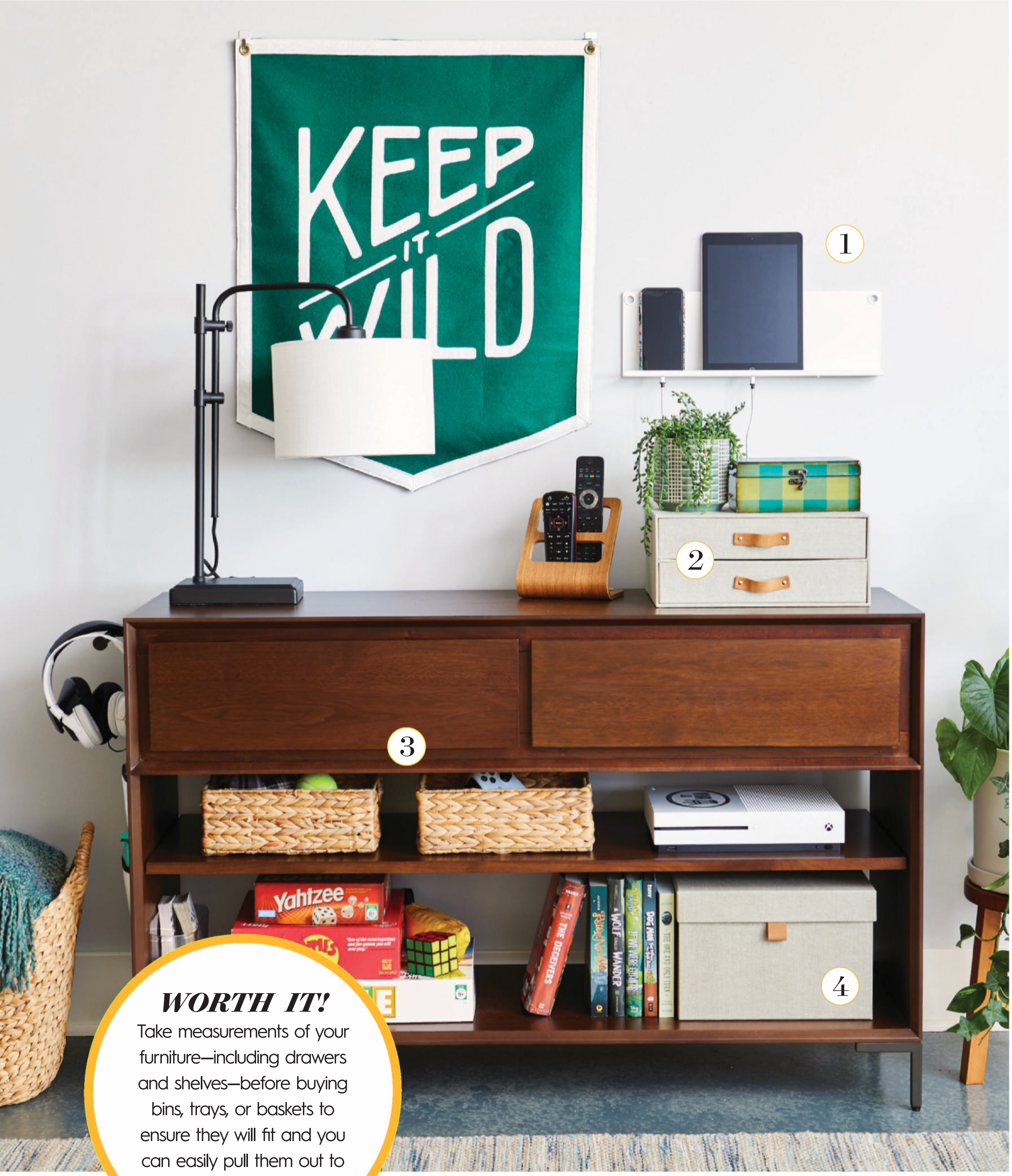
DID YOU FEED THE DOG?
A.M.
P.M.
SUN
MON
TUE
WED
THU
FRI
SAT

FAST + EASY FIXES

FAMILY GAME STATION

Keep everyone's gear organized and contained in one stylish and storage-packed console.

WRITER AND PRODUCER **MOLLY SINNETT** PHOTOGRAPHER **JASON DONNELLY**



1 WALL POWER Keep electronics charged and ready with a metal shelf featuring holes for cords. Hang it at eye level so teens will use it.

2 WORKING DECOR Family room storage needs to be attractive and hardworking. Leather-handle drawers look good and hide kids' art supplies without creating clutter.

3 BASKET CASE Open storage, such as this pair of baskets, collects dog toys and controllers, simplifying cleanup. "If something is hard to put away, we probably won't do it," professional organizer Cassandra Aarssen says in *Real Life Organizing.* "We will set it aside and pile it up to put away later. So make it easy."

4 HIDDEN VALUE Covertly store hand weights, exercise bands, and a yoga towel in a sturdy bin to make a quick home workout a cinch.

WORTH IT!

Take measurements of your furniture—including drawers and shelves—before buying bins, trays, or baskets to ensure they will fit and you can easily pull them out to access the contents.

5 SECRET CHARGE

A multiport dock attached to the back of your shelving unit brings the power to you. Mounting a power strip can offer the same convenience. Secure the dock with hook-and-loop tape used for hanging pictures to avoid damaging your furniture.

6 HANDHELD CALM

End the struggle to store small video game consoles like the Nintendo Switch by using stackable drawer organizers. A mix of sizes and repositionable dividers keeps everything—from the controller to the tiny parts and pieces—together.

7 WELL-ORDERED SIDESHOW

Repurpose a single-arm toilet paper holder as a perch for headsets and headphones. Below it, a simple canvas pocket system stores tissues and cleaning wipes to help keep germs in check.

RESOURCES BEGIN ON *PAGE 93.*

EASY ENTRIES

These three mini mudrooms make it effortless to pick up and drop off your gear, saving you time—whether you're coming or going.

WRITERS **SARAH HALVERSON** AND **MOLLY REID SINNETT** PRODUCER **MOLLY REID SINNETT** PHOTOGRAPHER **MARTY BALDWIN**

SHOE FIX
Install a shelf to create more usable space out of a built-in cubby, *above.* This melamine shelf rests on hidden cleats screwed into the sides. The open design helps you instantly spot your favorite footwear.

THE LITTLE THINGS
Catch sunglasses, keys, and other daily items in small baskets mounted at their bases to the wall, *above right.* The shelf above holds a clock to prompt everyone to get out the door on time.

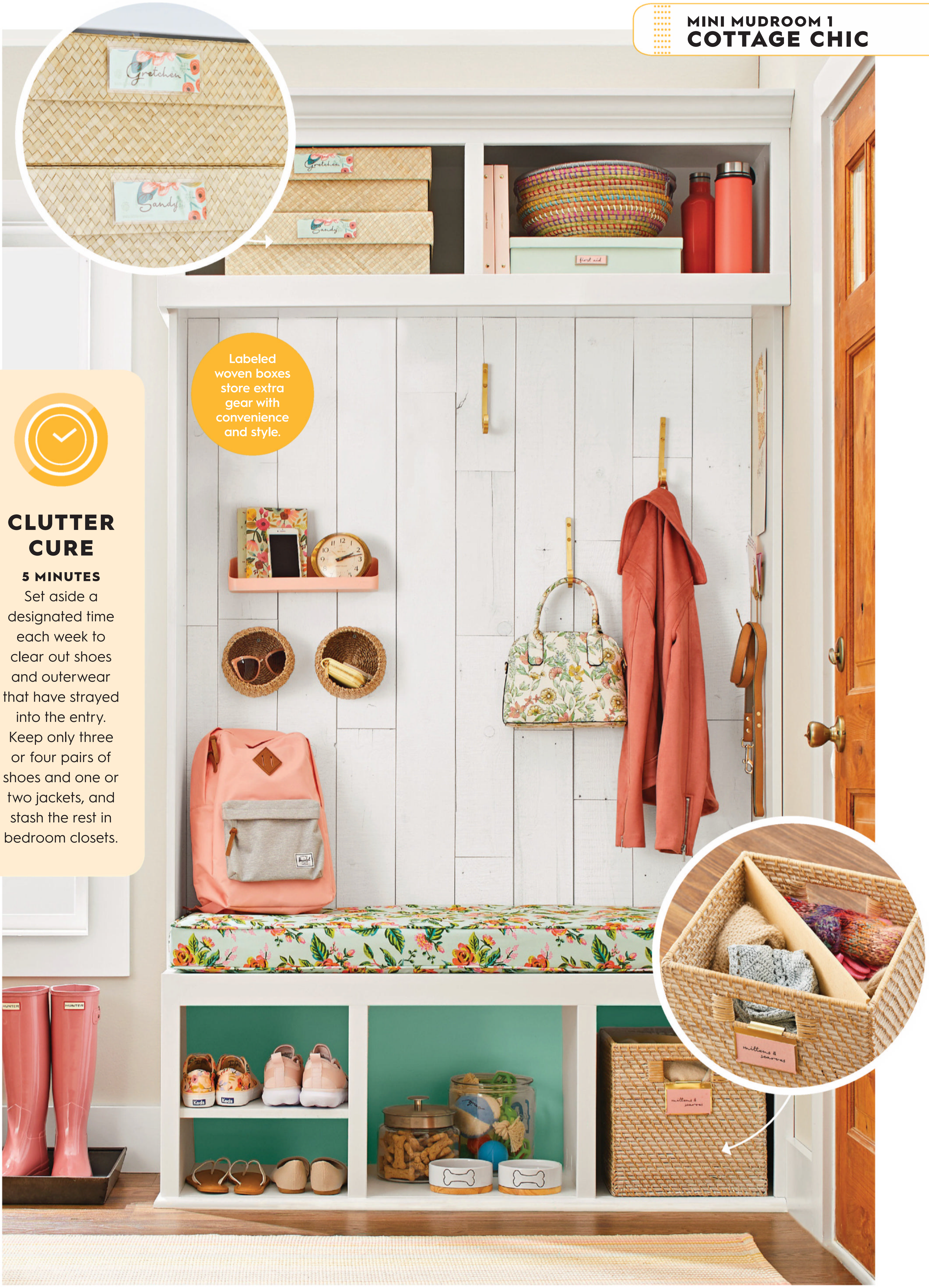
CLOSE QUARTERS
Hooks hung at various heights accommodate all family members, *opposite.* Baskets can help organize water bottles, pet items, and hats and mittens; cut an MDF panel to use as a divider, *bottom inset.*

A TIME-SAVING, CLUTTER-BUSTING MINI MUDROOM doesn't have to take up much space near the door. In fact, these three entryways encompass just a swatch of square footage, but they bring great rewards when it comes to efficiency, organization, and style. Common to all three are a few must-haves for today's families on the go: hooks mounted on the wall for jackets and bags; a cushioned seat for slipping shoes on and off; open shelves for items you need to retrieve quickly; and solid bins for anything that should stay hidden. You can further personalize your drop zone for children, pets, and items your family needs to get out the door—with time to spare.

RESOURCES BEGIN ON *PAGE 93.*

MINI MUDROOM 1

COTTAGE CHIC


Gretchen
Sandy
first aid
mittens & scarves

Labeled woven boxes store extra gear with convenience and style.

CLUTTER CURE

5 MINUTES
Set aside a designated time each week to clear out shoes and outerwear that have strayed into the entry. Keep only three or four pairs of shoes and one or two jackets, and stash the rest in bedroom closets.

CHARGED UP
Keep electronics charged and ready to go with an organizer that works for multiple devices, *left.* If you don't have an outlet near the door, consider hiring an electrician to move power to where you need it most.

A SIMPLE PLAN
Effective labels don't have to be wordy. Single initials, *below left,* tell household members where their items go. Stackable drawers round up small personal items—wallets, IDs, lip balm, gloves—so they don't get mixed up.

RIGHT AT HAND
Set out a small tray or dish, *below,* to corral keys, headphones, and loose change as you walk in the door. Below the tray, more mini drawers stow shared items like chargers and cords in one place while hiding any mess.

SONY
chargers
cords

ANOTHER
GREAT
IDEA

Rather than creating clutter on a counter, display your smartwatch prominently on this charging station. The Apple Watch Dock ($22) features a wood finish for an upscale look to match any decorating style. ***containerstore.com***

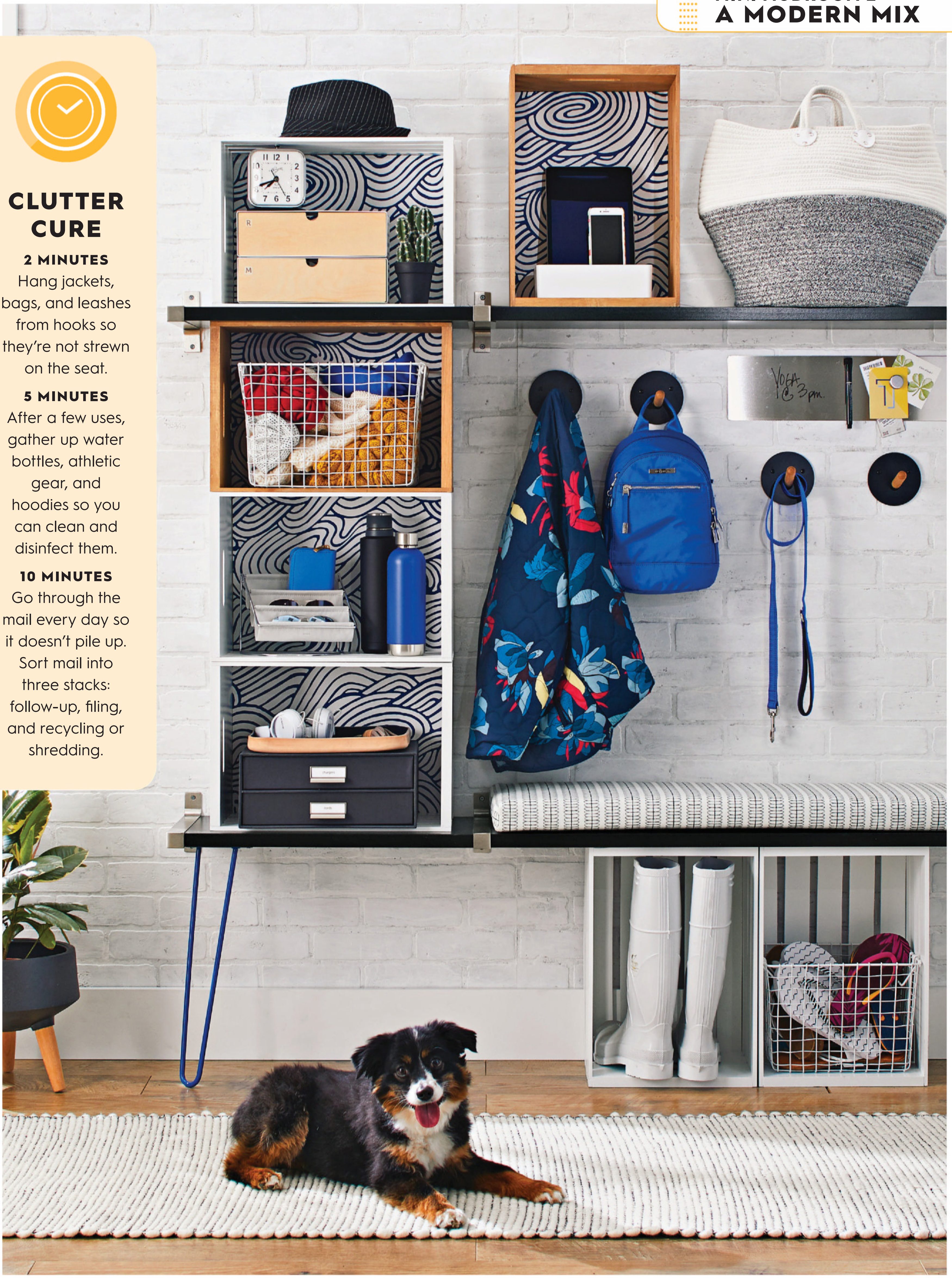
MINI MUDROOM 2
A MODERN MIX

CLUTTER CURE

2 MINUTES
Hang jackets, bags, and leashes from hooks so they're not strewn on the seat.

5 MINUTES
After a few uses, gather up water bottles, athletic gear, and hoodies so you can clean and disinfect them.

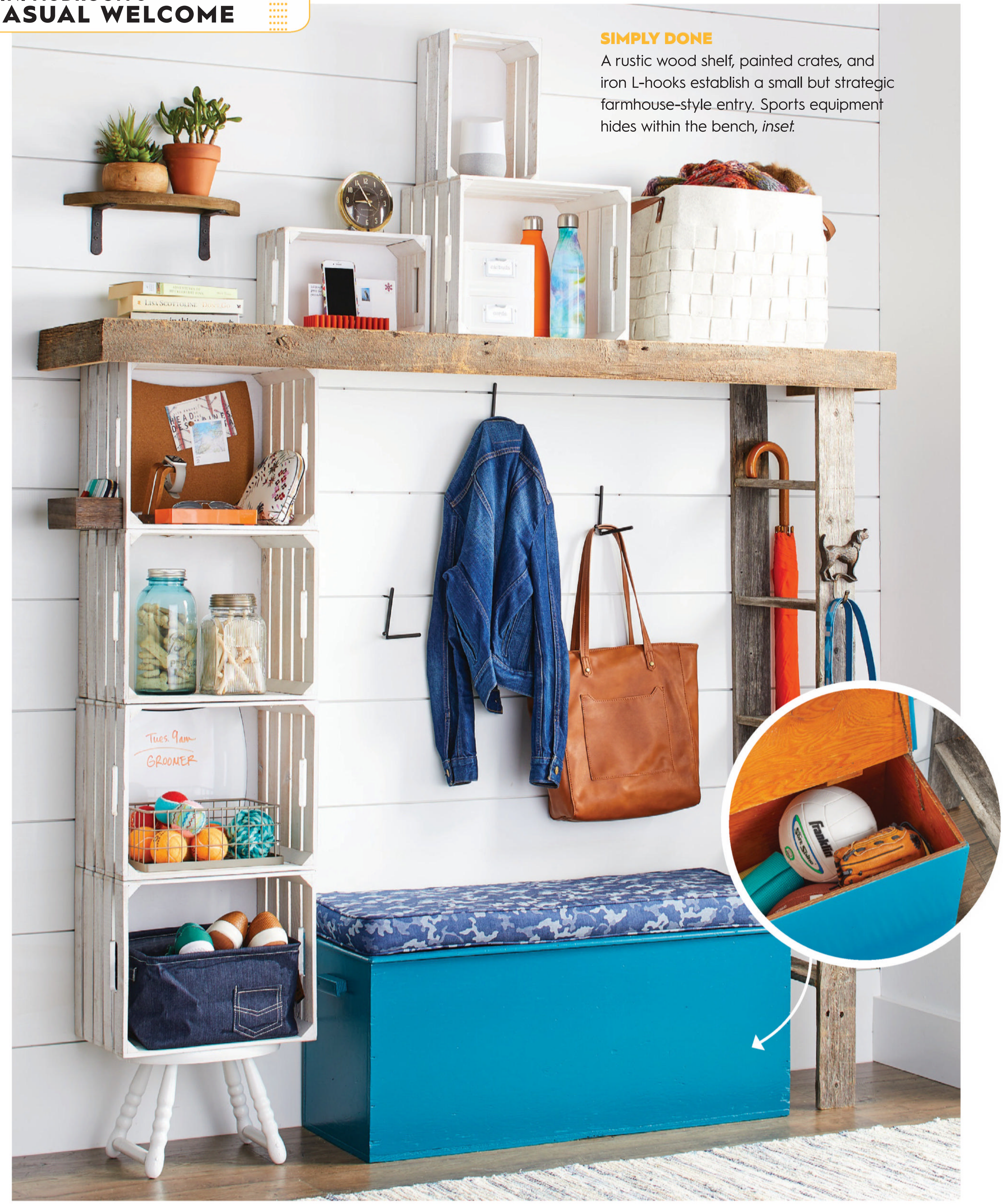
10 MINUTES
Go through the mail every day so it doesn't pile up. Sort mail into three stacks: follow-up, filing, and recycling or shredding.



FIT FOR A FAMILY Solid melamine shelving and a mix of stained and painted apple crates, *above,* create an industrial-look drop zone. To keep the bench from sagging, make the length 36 inches or less and reinforce the shelves with brackets, hidden cleats, and a single metal hairpin leg. Mesh bins contain items so they're visible, and a stainless-steel dry erase board highlights the week's events.

MINI MUDROOM 3

CASUAL WELCOME



SIMPLY DONE
A rustic wood shelf, painted crates, and iron L-hooks establish a small but strategic farmhouse-style entry. Sports equipment hides within the bench, *inset.*

CLUTTER CURE

15 MINUTES Plan to swap out outerwear, shoes, and accessories as the season changes. Store out-of-season items in an extra closet or somewhere else out of sight. A basket for winter hats and gloves can transform into a spot for suntan lotion, bug spray, and umbrellas as the weather warms.

GREAT CRATES
Each wooden crate is screwed to the others (and the wall) for stability, *left*. One crate is backed by a corkboard for pinning invitations and reminders; another sports glass jars filled with dog biscuits and rawhide treats.

SAFE AND SOUND
Two small drawers keep phone chargers, earbuds, and small electronics free of tangles and dust, *below*. Metal pulls double as slots for labels so everyone can quickly grab what they need as they rush out the door.

TIDY UP YOUR SMALL ENTRYWAY

Create more minutes in the day by keeping an orderly entryway. Here are some simple strategies.

PUT WALLS TO WORK

Use hooks to keep jackets, umbrellas, and leashes within reach, and position them so they're convenient for all family members. Be sure to place some hooks low enough for kids to easily reach their gear. Situate some shelves high on the wall (but still within reach of adults) as a surface for baskets, bins, crates, and cubbies.

BE SMART ABOUT CONTAINERS

Open containers (trays, bowls, and clear canisters) can hold attractive or frequently used items; closed bins and drawers can help conceal messier gear. Add smaller containers or dividers to crates and baskets so small items can easily be found.

earbuds
cords

INSIDE STORY

Concealing clutter is the key to keeping busy family spaces in check.

WRITERS **PAMELA PORTER** AND
RENEE FREEMON MULVIHILL
PRODUCER **LESLIE POYZER**
PHOTOGRAPHER **ADAM ALBRIGHT**

BUSY FAMILY ROOMS are often jam-packed with stuff. But it's hard to relax when you're surrounded by clutter. This living room keeps the peace by hiding clutter behind closed doors and offering smart storage strategies to make items quick and easy to find. On the focal-point wall, five unfinished bookcases have been painted and installed to look like built-ins. In the center of the space, a coffee table fashioned from stacked drawers hides homework, games, and more.
RESOURCES BEGIN ON *PAGE 93.*

1 HIDDEN ELEMENTS

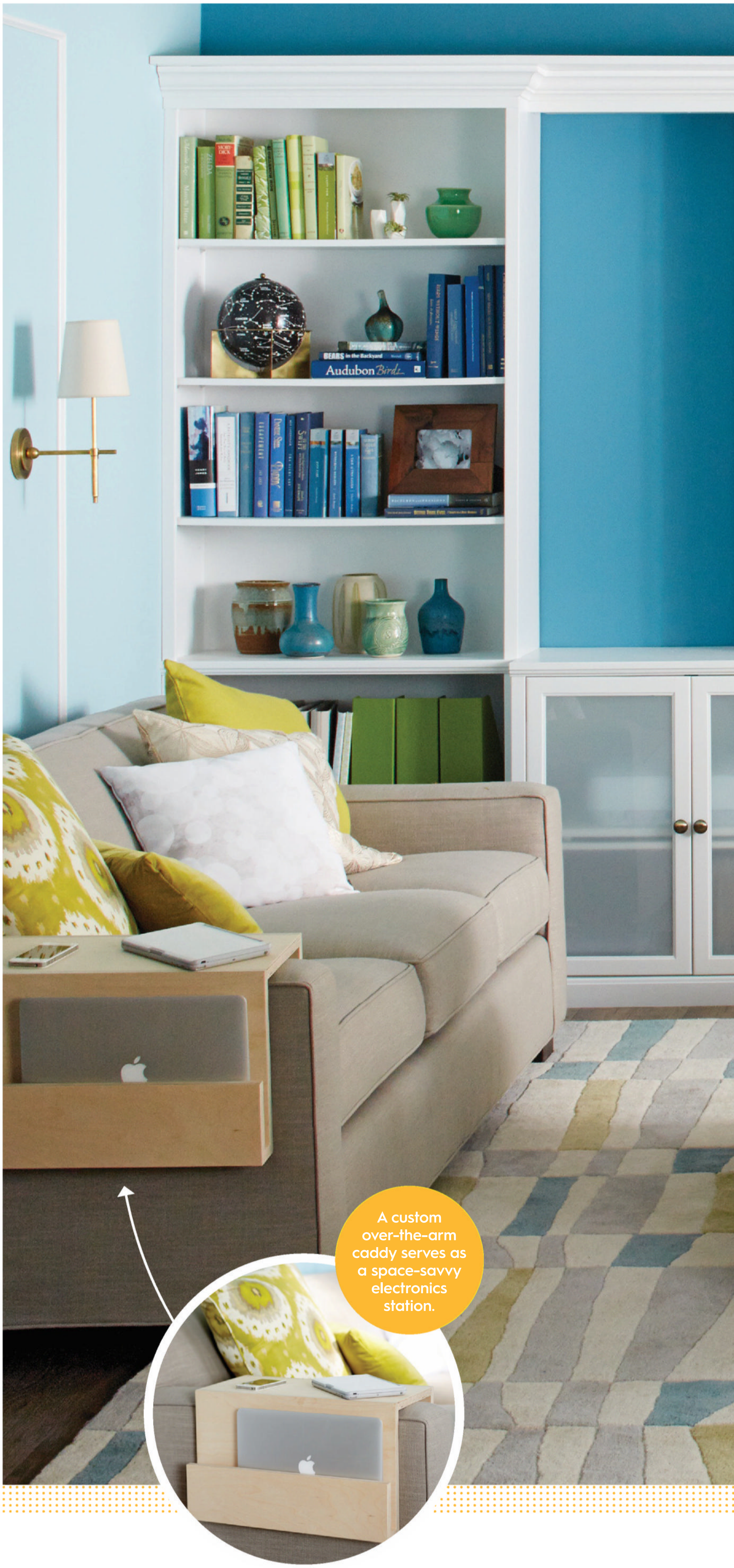
Panels mounted on closet tracks roll aside to reveal a television on the back wall. To reinforce the illusion, two pieces of artwork are framed and hung to look like a single canvas when the panels are closed. Tip: Use floor guides to keep the panels from swinging out at the bottom.

2 PRETTY BUT PRACTICAL

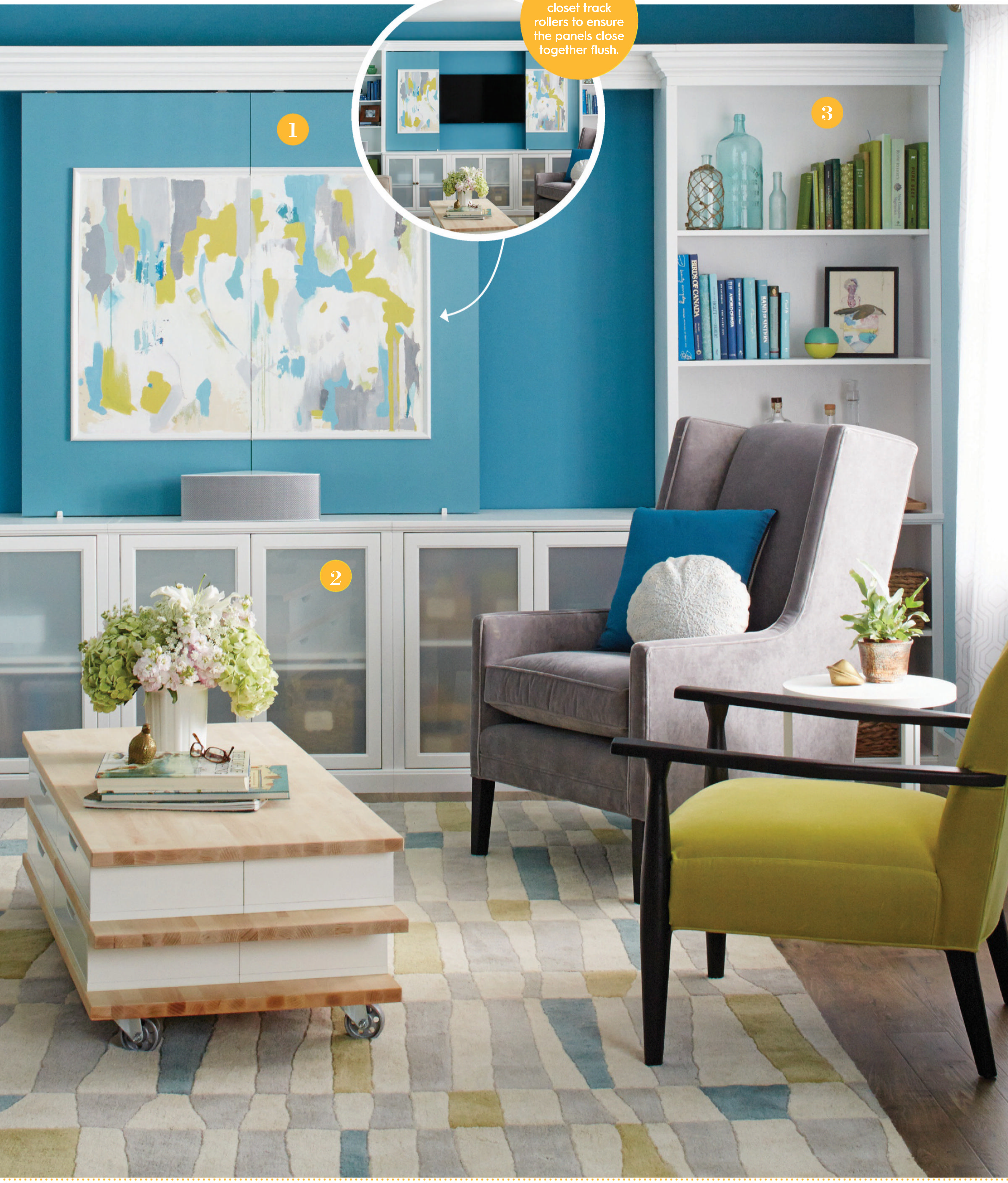
Glass panels replace wood ones on base cabinets. The glass allows most remote controls to work through the panels without having to open the doors, but the translucent covering shields items from view. We used inexpensive frosted window film.

3 CUSTOM FINISH

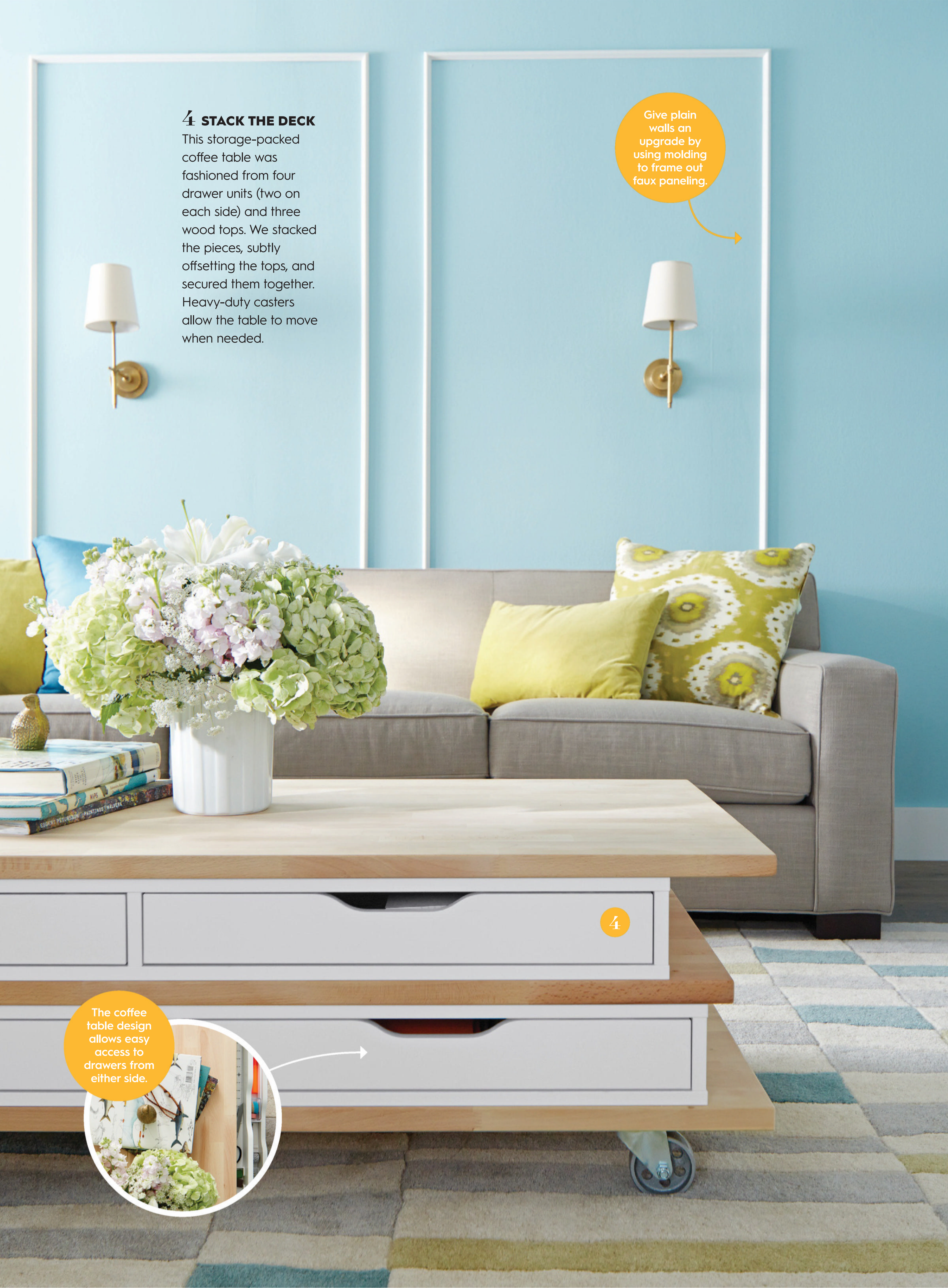
Crown molding added to stock bookcases serves two purposes—it gives the cases built-in style and hides the closet track in front of the television.



A custom over-the-arm caddy serves as a space-savvy electronics station.



Use identical closet track rollers to ensure the panels close together flush.



4 STACK THE DECK

This storage-packed coffee table was fashioned from four drawer units (two on each side) and three wood tops. We stacked the pieces, subtly offsetting the tops, and secured them together. Heavy-duty casters allow the table to move when needed.

Give plain walls an upgrade by using molding to frame out faux paneling.

The coffee table design allows easy access to drawers from either side.

Allocating one binder for each year makes for easy retrieval.

5 SHELF LIFE

Plenty of open shelving climbs the walls to make the most of vertical space and frame the television. Collectibles, books, and storage baskets displayed on the shelves bring additional color and texture to the room.

6 SINGLE FILE

To keep paperwork tidy, file it in matching binders on a dedicated shelf. If your binders don't have labels, make your own; we simply wrote on washi tape to label ours.

7 ALL TOGETHER

Natural baskets warm up the space and group similar items. Lidded baskets hide contents, while lidless versions offer quick access. We cut labels from balsa wood and wrote words using a wood-burning tool. Tip: Write the words in pencil first.

TEATIME ESSENTIALS
Show off a grouping of your favorite teacups and a kettle on open shelves so you can grab them easily. Mix and match is OK—it just adds extra character.

KITCHEN+ PANTRY

Keep everyday cooking tools handy to get meals on the table faster.

48 Goal: Smart Meal Planning
50 Goal: Quick Breakfasts
52 Fast + Easy Fixes: Cabinet Inserts
54 Pantry Power-Up
58 Small Smarts

RESOURCES BEGIN ON *PAGE 93.*

10 5 0 55 50
SEPTEMBER
2023

WITHIN REACH
You're always ready to set the table with a basket of napkins at hand. It easily transitions from shelf to table and looks nice on display.

PRODUCER: KATE MALO; PHOTOGRAPHER: MARTY BALDWIN

WEEK OF 13TH – 19TH
NOTES PREP HELP
S HOMEMADE SAUCE
M STIR-FRY
PIANO LESSONS
CHOP VEGGIES (BITE SIZE!)
T CHICKEN CURRY
DEFROST CHICKEN
W LEFTOVERS + SOUP
CHURCH NIGHT
T CHEESE TOASTIES
LATE MEETING
BUTTER BOTH SIDES OF BREAD
F BAKED POTATO BAR
START POTATOES
S NIGHT OFF!
DINNER WITH B+N
WEEK OF 20TH – 26TH
NOTES PREP HELP
S ROASTED CHICKEN
GALLERY PREVIEW
M SALMON KALE SALAD
T VEGGIE FAJITAS
LATE PRACTICE
CHOP VEGGIES (SLICES!)
W PESTO SANDWICHES
CHURCH NIGHT
T CHICKEN CAESER SALAD
SLICE CHICKEN + WASH LETTUCE
F NIGHT OFF!
ORDER PIZZA
S BURGERS — DAD'S GRILLING ☺
Warrensburg-Latham Schools Lunch Menu
Vigar

GOAL

SMART MEAL PLANNING

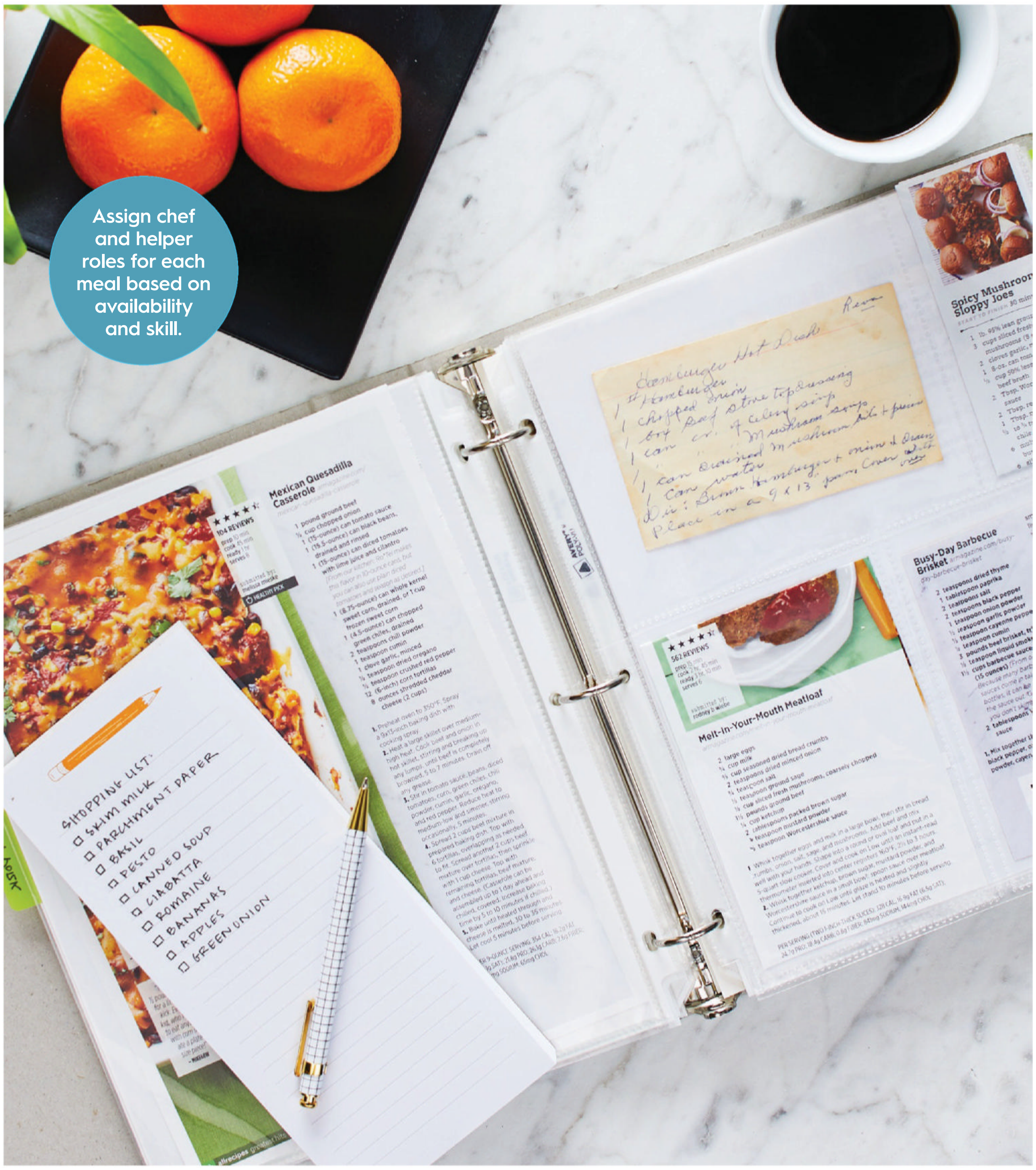
Set aside just a little time each week to map out a plan for nightly meals and help each day run more smoothly.

WRITERS **SAMANTHA S. THORPE** AND **RENEE FREEMON MULVIHILL**

☑ **CREATE A BINDER** filled with your family's favorite recipes, *right,* and use this tool to plan the meals for the week ahead. Be sure to review your calendar as you plan; opt for slow cooker meals on busy nights and try new recipes on evenings you have no activities planned.

☐ **POST A WEEKLY MEAL PLAN** where everyone can see it, *opposite*. Under the plan create a station for writing utensils and label-making tools, *opposite inset,* so you can quickly update shopping lists and put labels on containers of leftovers.

☐ **STOCK THE PANTRY** with key ingredients so you'll be ready if your meal planning goes awry. Try to have a variety of pastas, oils, canned tomatoes, beans, broths, fast-cook rices, sauces, taco shells, garlic, onions, and potatoes on hand at all times so you'll be able to whip up a quick meal when you need it.


Mexican Quesadilla Casserole
Melt-in-Your-Mouth Meatloaf
Busy-Day Barbecue Brisket
Spicy Mushroom Sloppy Joes
SHOPPING LIST
☐ SKIM MILK
☐ PARCHMENT PAPER
☐ BASIL
☐ PESTO
☐ CANNED SOUP
☐ CIABATTA
☐ ROMAINE
☐ BANANAS
☐ APPLES
☐ GREEN ONION

Assign chef and helper roles for each meal based on availability and skill.

ANOTHER GREAT *IDEA*

If you have some free time, prep extra batches of lasagna, soups, and more so you'll have homemade meals ready for those busy nights jam-packed with family activities. Label and date each container and stash them in a stand-alone freezer. Use a dry-erase memo board to maintain an up-to-date inventory. Be sure to add a date to each item on your inventory list so you'll know what to use up first.

> "When you set aside roughly 20 minutes each night to prep for the next day, you make the morning routine a little less stressful."
>
> **—HOLLY REISEM HANNA, AUTHOR, *TIME MANAGEMENT IN 20 MINUTES A DAY***

tea
coffee
DONUT Worry
KitchenAid
T
H

GOAL

QUICK BREAKFASTS

Take the craziness out of the morning rush by creating a ready-to-go serving station that jump-starts your day.

☑ **PLAN AHEAD** and save time by using the tools and appliances you already have more efficiently. Learn how to set your coffeemaker's timer so it will brew your java when you hop into the shower. Or prep extra hot water in the teakettle so you have enough for your drink and your instant cereal.

☐ **DECANT PANTRY STAPLES** such as cereals, dried fruit, nuts, and granola in clear, closed containers. You'll keep them fresher longer and know exactly how much you have. Keep cereal handy so kids can get their own breakfast in the morning using a no-mess dispenser, *below.*

☐ **KEEP IT ALL TOGETHER** by designating one spot for the coffeepot and kettle, and a place for mugs, filters, teas, and strainers. "A barista bar creates a first stop for the morning caffeine seekers and makes the morning ritual more streamlined," professional organizer Vicki Norris says.

ZEVRO
NUTS
BERRIES

To keep kids in check, look for dispensers with portion control features.

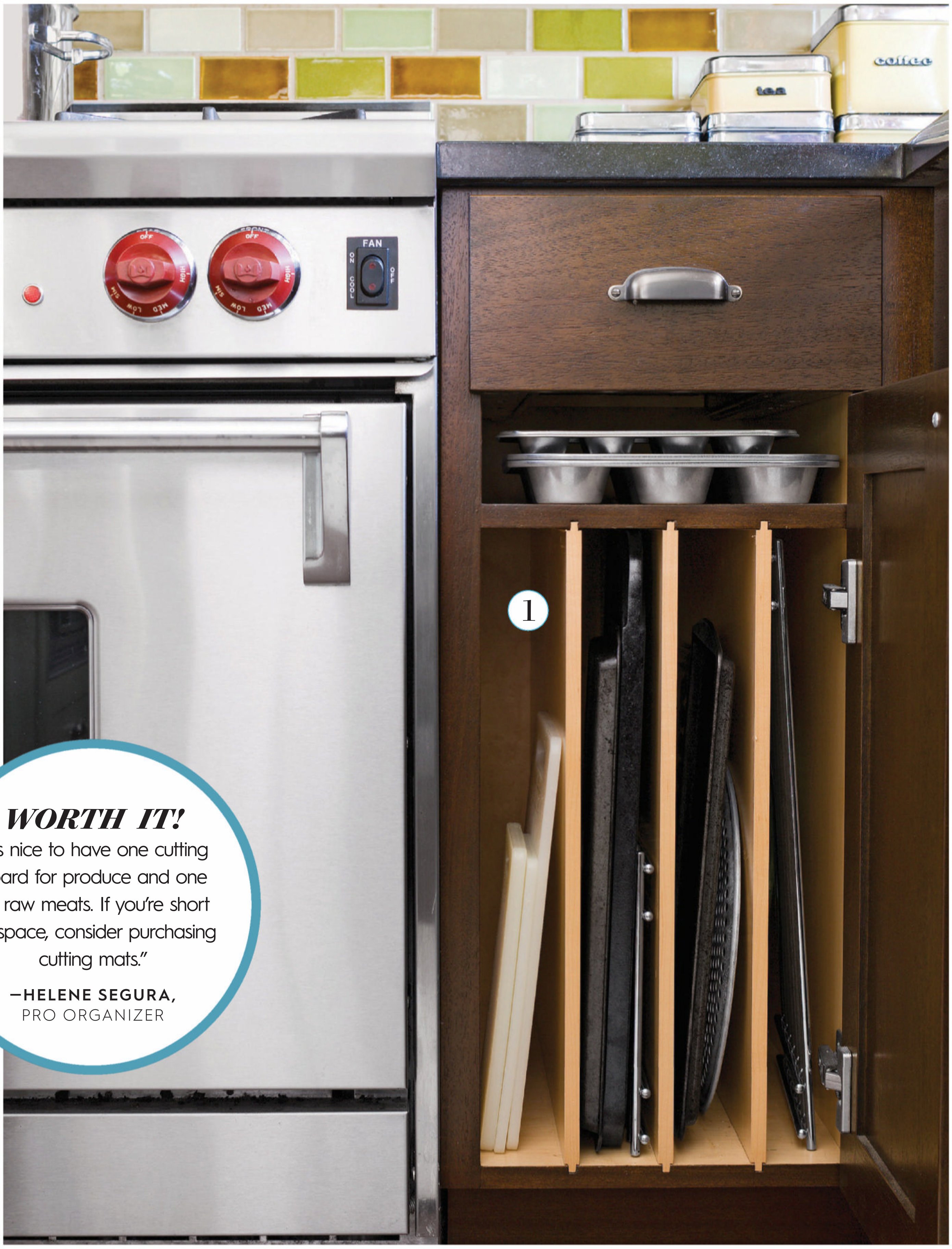
ANOTHER GREAT *IDEA*

When you come up with a plan and set up breakfast essentials the night before, busy mornings are suddenly a whole lot easier. Dini Klein, author and founder of the Prep + Rally meal prep service, suggests putting items out in bowls the evening before so they'll be ready for kids to grab in the morning. For example, you might put their cereal in bowls with a cover over the top, or you can get ingredients measured out and stored in the fridge or freezer for smoothies. Klein suggests making overnight oats and prepping fruit, seeds, nuts, and other toppings for a fun breakfast bar. Or premake pancake batter the night before so it is easier to make pancakes on busy mornings.

FAST + EASY FIXES

CABINET INSERTS

Make the most of available kitchen storage space with handy organizers that are easy to add to existing cabinets.



1 UPRIGHT SOLUTIONS

Stop tugging on baking sheets, cutting boards, or cooling racks crammed inside a cabinet. Use built-in wood dividers to separate and stand flat items vertically. Wire add-ons are budget-friendly and accomplish the same goal.

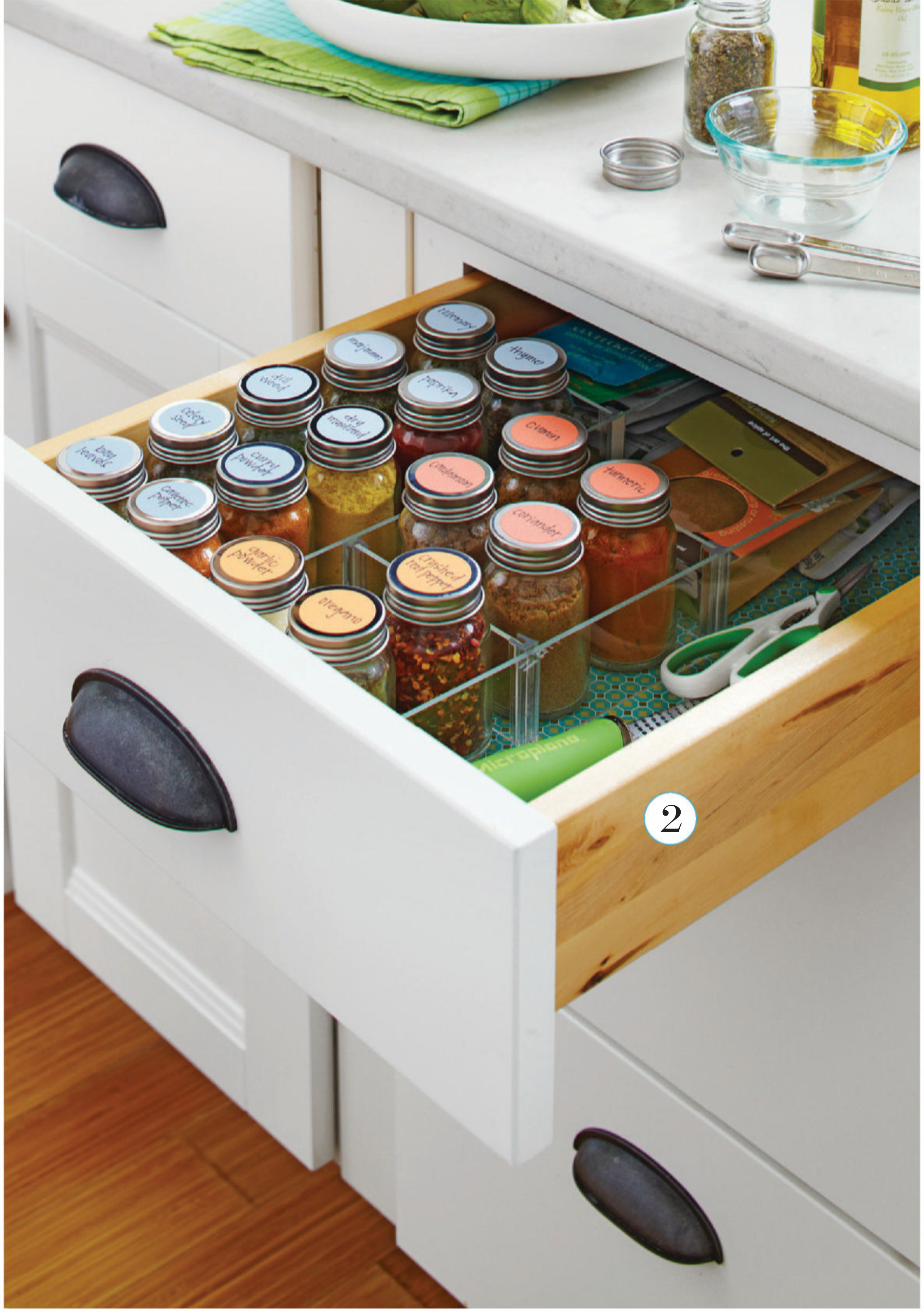
WORTH IT!

"It's nice to have one cutting board for produce and one for raw meats. If you're short on space, consider purchasing cutting mats."

—HELENE SEGURA,
PRO ORGANIZER

CLUTTER CURE

30 MINUTES
Schedule an extra half hour this week to empty a cabinet or drawer and sort its contents. Have two boxes on hand: one for broken things or trash, the other for donations. Wipe down every item and put things away so you can easily access each item.

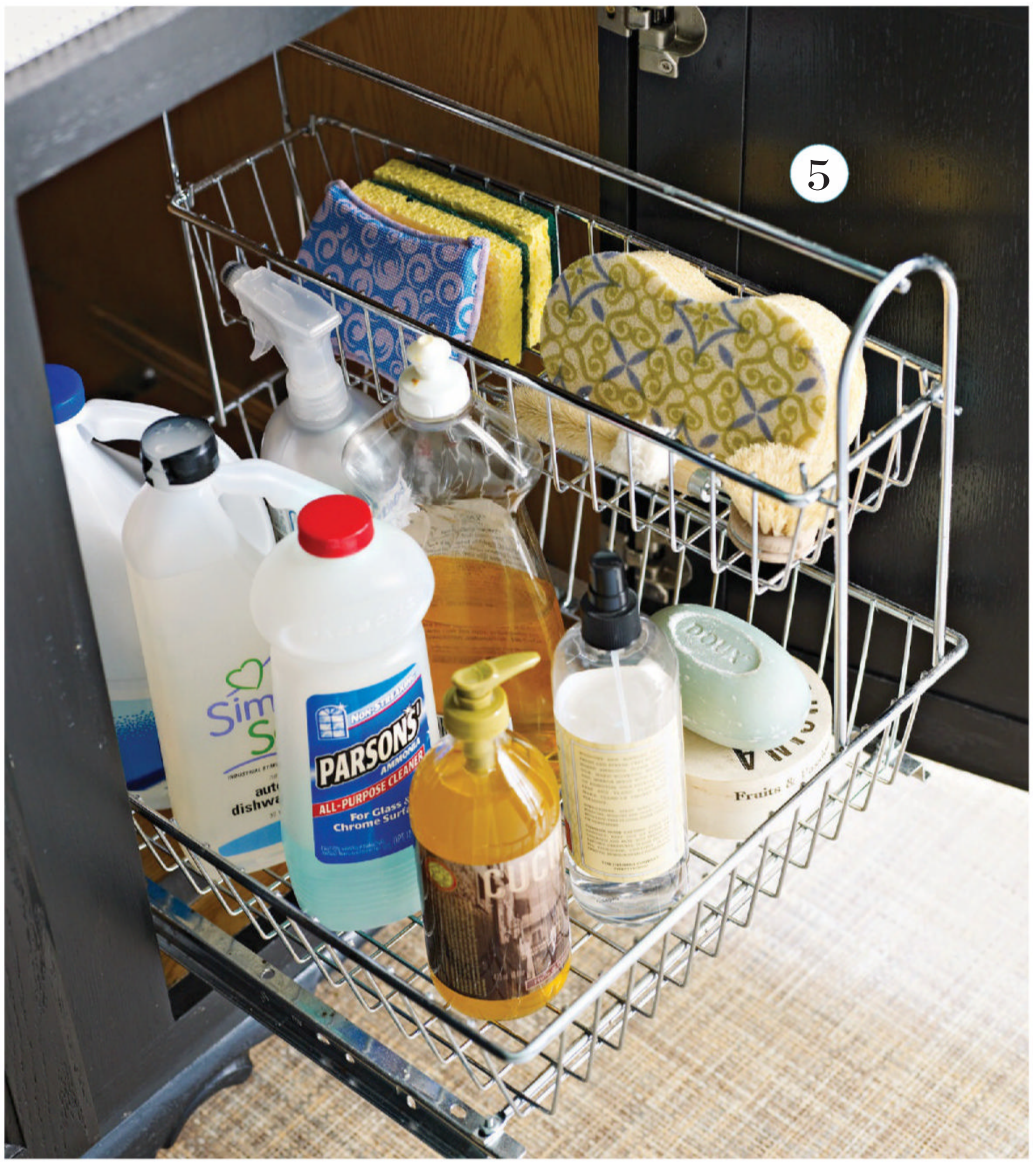


2 **KEEP ONLY THE GOOD ONES**
Spices expire in 3–4 years. Store the ones you use most close to where you cook. The rest can go in a less-accessible cabinet. Visit *eatbydate.com* to help determine when it's time to toss ingredients.

3 **SORT IT** Stop tossing utensils aimlessly into drawers. Instead, employ acrylic drawer organizers sized to divide items into categories.

4 **NO MORE TOPPLE**
Get your food storage containers in shape by slimming down to one brand of stackable containers and using a desk sorter to keep lids separated.

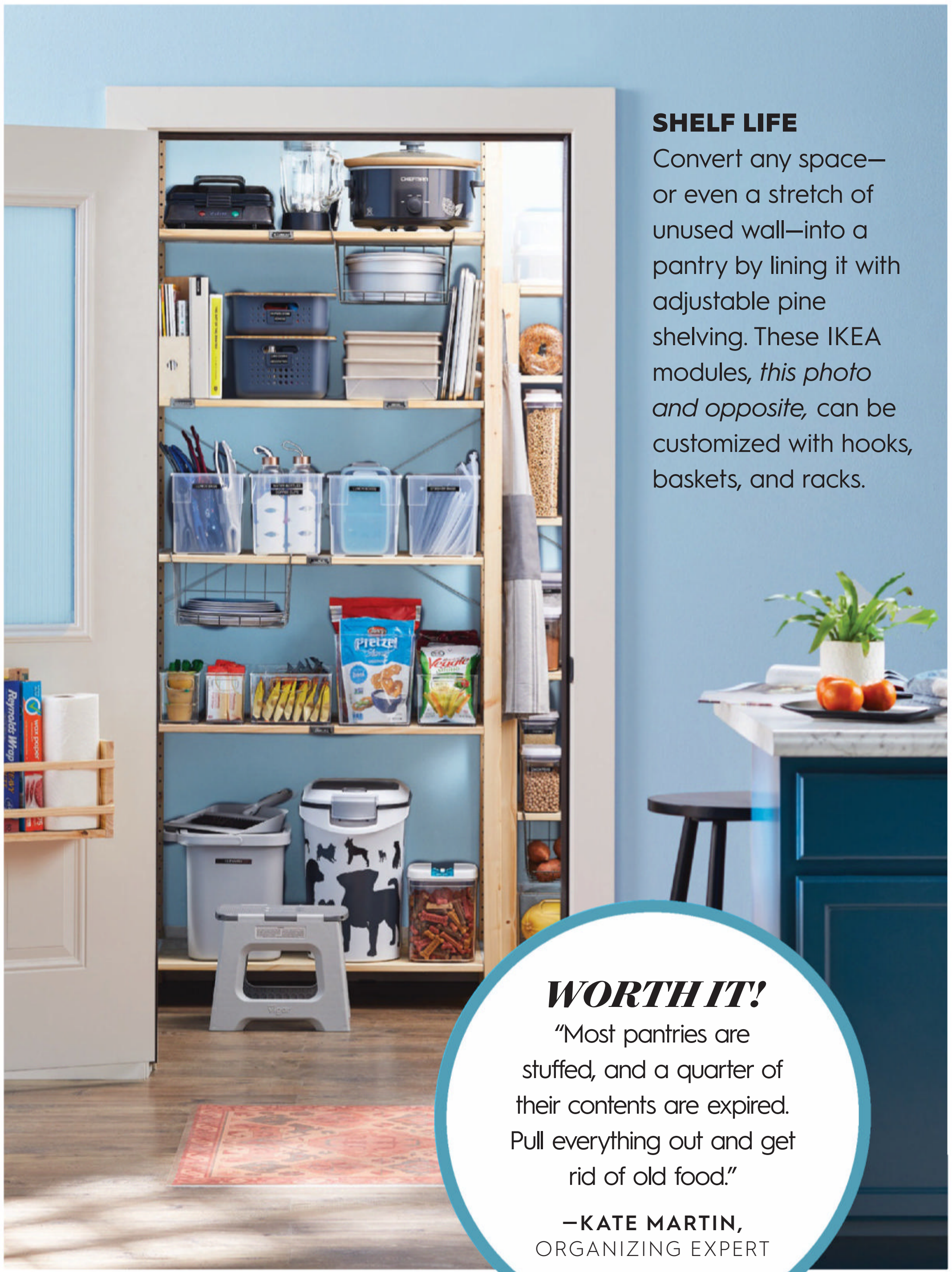
5 **PULL IT OUT** Install a wire undersink pullout that includes a designated place for scrubbing tools and another for taller supplies. The mix of heights makes the most of awkward space around plumbing.



PANTRY *POWER*-UP

Want to become a mealtime hero? Stock your kitchen storage spot with everything you need to fix good meals fast.

WRITERS **BRIAN KRAMER** AND **SARAH HALVERSON** PRODUCER **LESLIE POYZER** PHOTOGRAPHER **MARTY BALDWIN**



SHELF LIFE
Convert any space—or even a stretch of unused wall—into a pantry by lining it with adjustable pine shelving. These IKEA modules, *this photo and opposite,* can be customized with hooks, baskets, and racks.

WORTH IT!

"Most pantries are stuffed, and a quarter of their contents are expired. Pull everything out and get rid of old food."

—**KATE MARTIN,**
ORGANIZING EXPERT

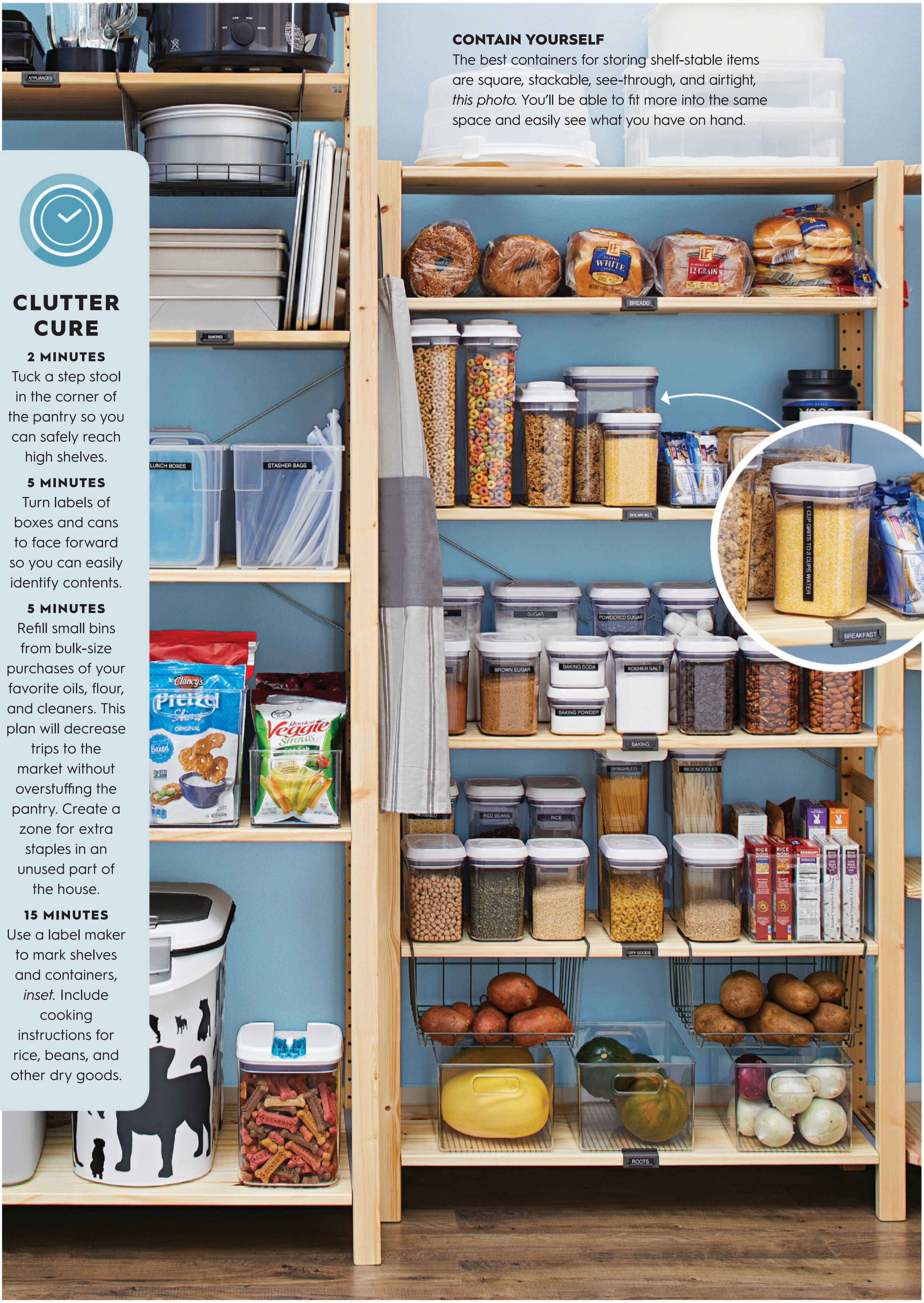
WHETHER YOURS IS A SPACIOUS WALK-IN area or a single cabinet, a hardworking pantry is about planning, not spending money. Follow three key strategies:

SORT IT OUT. Optimize your pantry by first emptying it. Toss expired, stale, and unappetizing items, then group what's left into categories that are meaningful for your family. "I'm seeing nutrition-minded clients organize using categories like proteins, oils, and sweeteners rather than pasta, canned veggies, and baking supplies," professional organizer Kathy Jenkins says.

THINK BEFORE YOU RESTOCK. Reposition shelves to match the height of items to be stored, and consider limiting shelves to 12 inches deep or shallower. Place foods you eat every day at eye level or just below. Position kid-friendly categories (breakfast, snacks, lunch-making supplies) at appropriate heights. Reserve top shelves for partyware, small appliances, and lightweight items like paper goods. Relegate heavy items (pet food, beverages, larger appliances) to the lowest shelves or the floor.

FINISH WITH CONTAINERS. Resist the urge to shop for containers until everything is back in your pantry. Then count the size and number of containers you need and purchase established brands so you can add and adjust as your inventory evolves.

RESOURCES BEGIN ON *PAGE 93.*


APPLIANCES
BAKING
LUNCH BOXES
STASHER BAGS
BREADS
BREAKFAST
SUGAR
POWDERED SUGAR
BROWN SUGAR
BAKING SODA
KOSHER SALT
BAKING POWDER
BAKING
SPAGHETTI
RICE NOODLES
PANKO
RED BEANS
RICE
DRY GOODS
ROOTS
1 CUP GRITS TO 3 CUPS WATER
BREAKFAST

CONTAIN YOURSELF
The best containers for storing shelf-stable items are square, stackable, see-through, and airtight, *this photo*. You'll be able to fit more into the same space and easily see what you have on hand.

CLUTTER CURE

2 MINUTES
Tuck a step stool in the corner of the pantry so you can safely reach high shelves.

5 MINUTES
Turn labels of boxes and cans to face forward so you can easily identify contents.

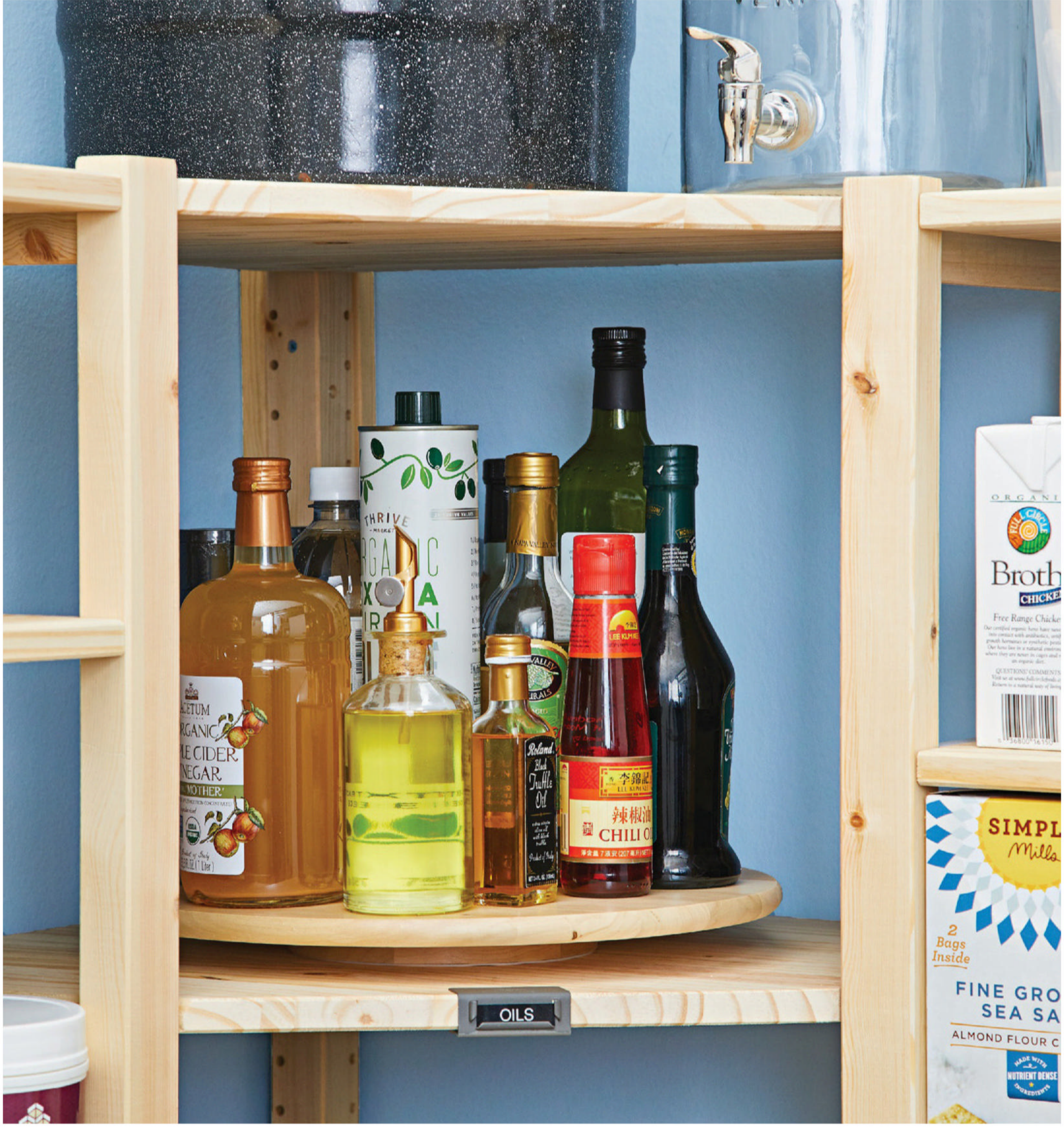
5 MINUTES
Refill small bins from bulk-size purchases of your favorite oils, flour, and cleaners. This plan will decrease trips to the market without overstuffing the pantry. Create a zone for extra staples in an unused part of the house.

15 MINUTES
Use a label maker to mark shelves and containers, *inset*. Include cooking instructions for rice, beans, and other dry goods.

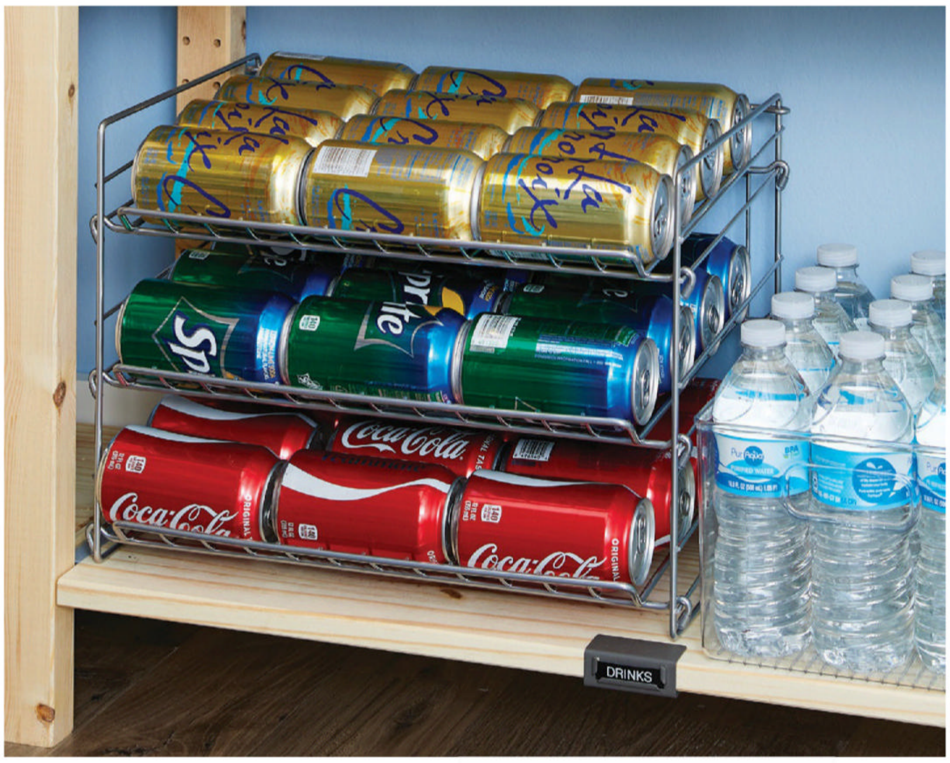
CORNER CONTROL
A lazy Susan, *right,* puts a corner's worth of ingredients at your fingertips. You won't miss the few inches of shelf space you give up, and you'll love not losing items in the deepest reaches of your pantry.

RIGHT SIZE
Large bins hold paper goods and party supplies, *below.* "Select containers that hold the maximum you'll ever have," Jenkins says. "It's better to have a bin three-quarters full than one that's full and you still have overflow."

QUICK UPGRADES
Risers, stair-step ledges, and racks inexpensively optimize shelves and display small items. This sloped wire rack, *below right,* uses gravity to bring cans to the front.



PARTY SUPPLIES



ANOTHER
GREAT
IDEA

LABEL LOGIC Good labels reinforce the organizing changes you make. The Brother Label Maker with Carrying Case ($50) churns out coordinated adhesive labels with the touch of a few buttons and is easy to store. ***thecontainerstore.com***

BIN THERE
After you shop, unpack bulk goods and individually wrapped items into clear, shoebox-size bins. It will make your pantry look neater and you'll know when you need to buy more of something.

CLUTTER CURE

2 MINUTES
When stashing slow cookers, blenders, and stock pots, flip the lids upside-down so they can fit on a shorter shelf.

10 MINUTES
Put an end to losing canned goods at the back of the pantry and add a few shallow shelves on an unused wall that will let you see all your canned goods at once.

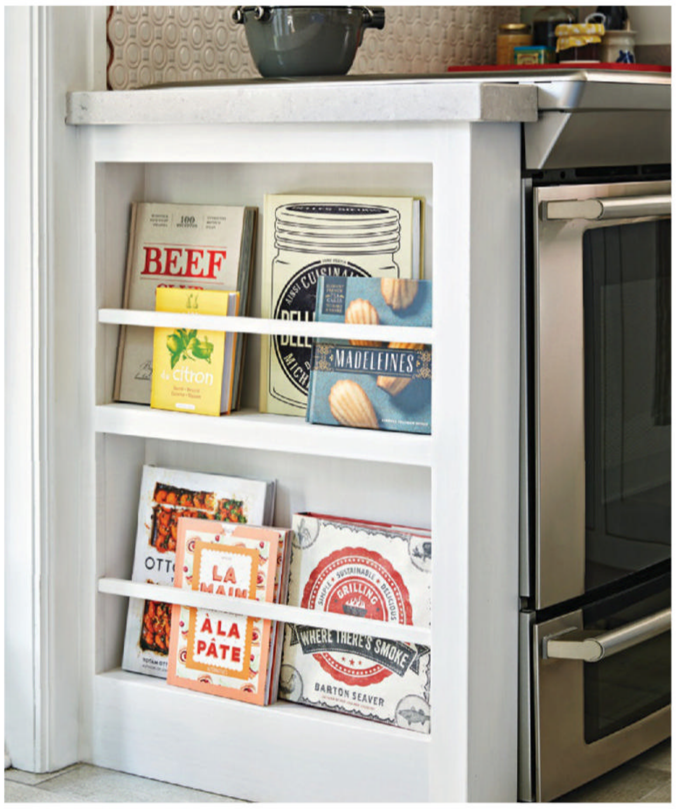
15 MINUTES
Consider moving some items elsewhere to free up pantry space. Find a spot for foil and plastic wrap in a nearby drawer; bring sodas and juice to the fridge; place a roll of trash bags at the bottom of the trash can; and slip the recycling bin under the sink.

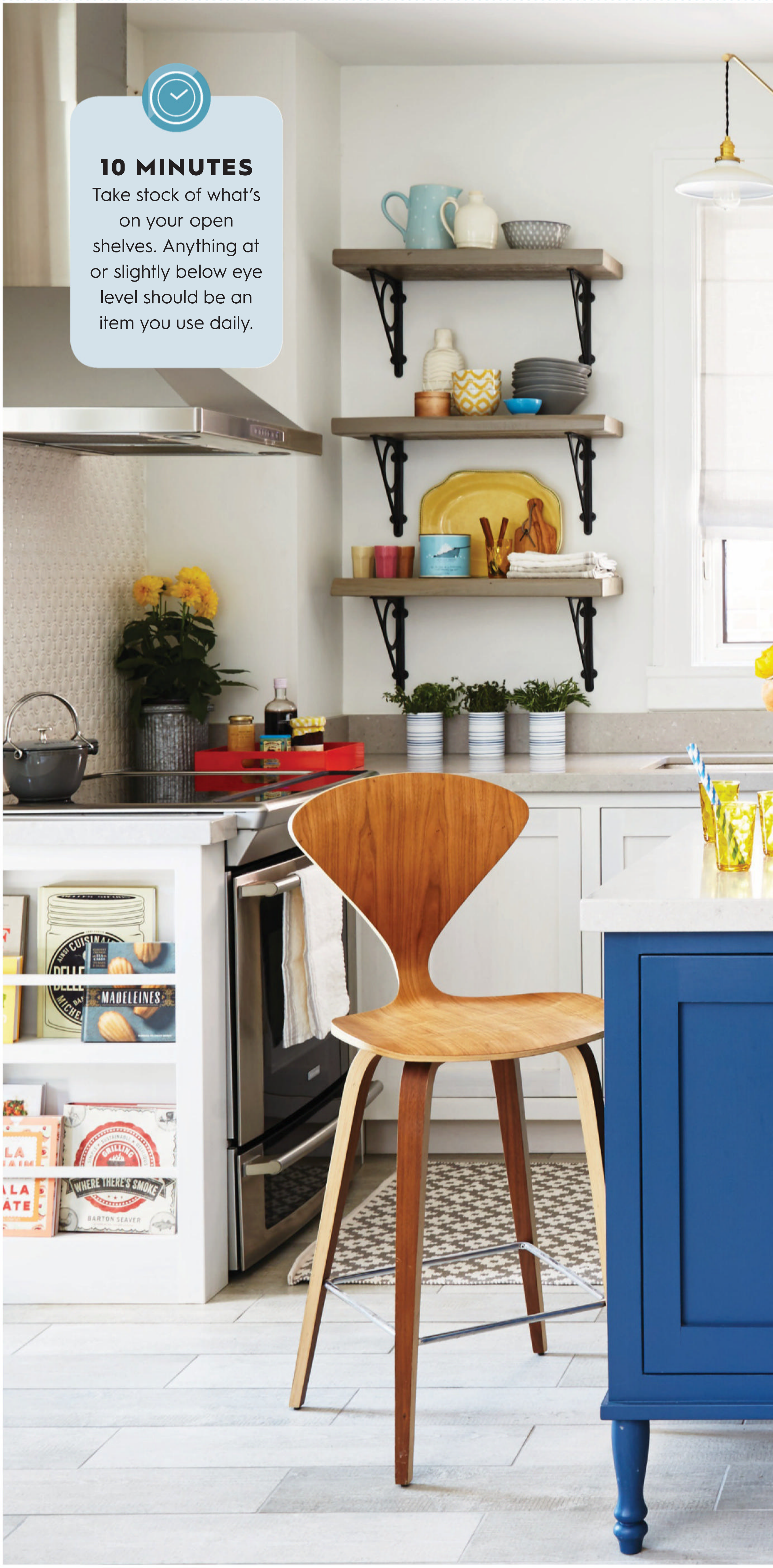
SMALL SMARTS

Two compact kitchens showcase time-saving design details and clever storage.

WRITER **DEBRA STEILEN**
PHOTOGRAPHERS **STACEY BRANDFORD AND LINCOLN BARBOUR**

KEEP THINGS ACCESSIBLE and you can turn your space-starved kitchen into an efficient powerhouse. Our featured kitchens transform precious square footage into hard-working zones that save time and energy—as these two examples demonstrate. Kitchen No. 1, *right,* uses well-planned details to streamline cooking. Open shelves put dishes within arm's reach. A petite kitchen island with doors on two sides saves valuable steps by stashing cookware close to the range and fridge. The microwave is placed at a height where kids can reach it and help with food prep. The designers even used five spare inches by the range to keep cookbooks handy, *below.* Maybe the smartest detail of all: This double-duty kitchen opens up to the dining room so adults can make dinner and supervise homework at the same time.





10 MINUTES

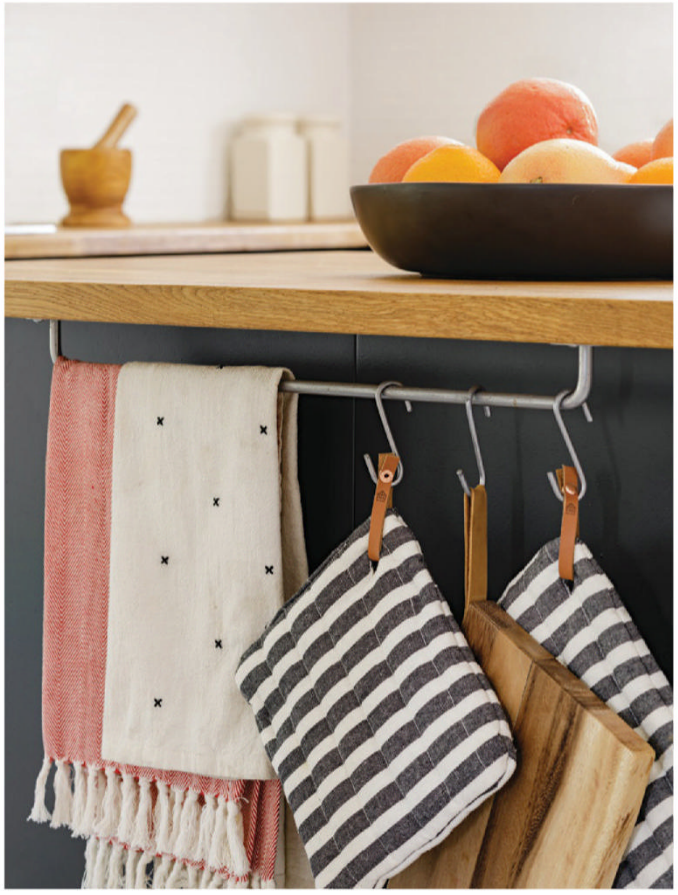
Take stock of what's on your open shelves. Anything at or slightly below eye level should be an item you use daily.

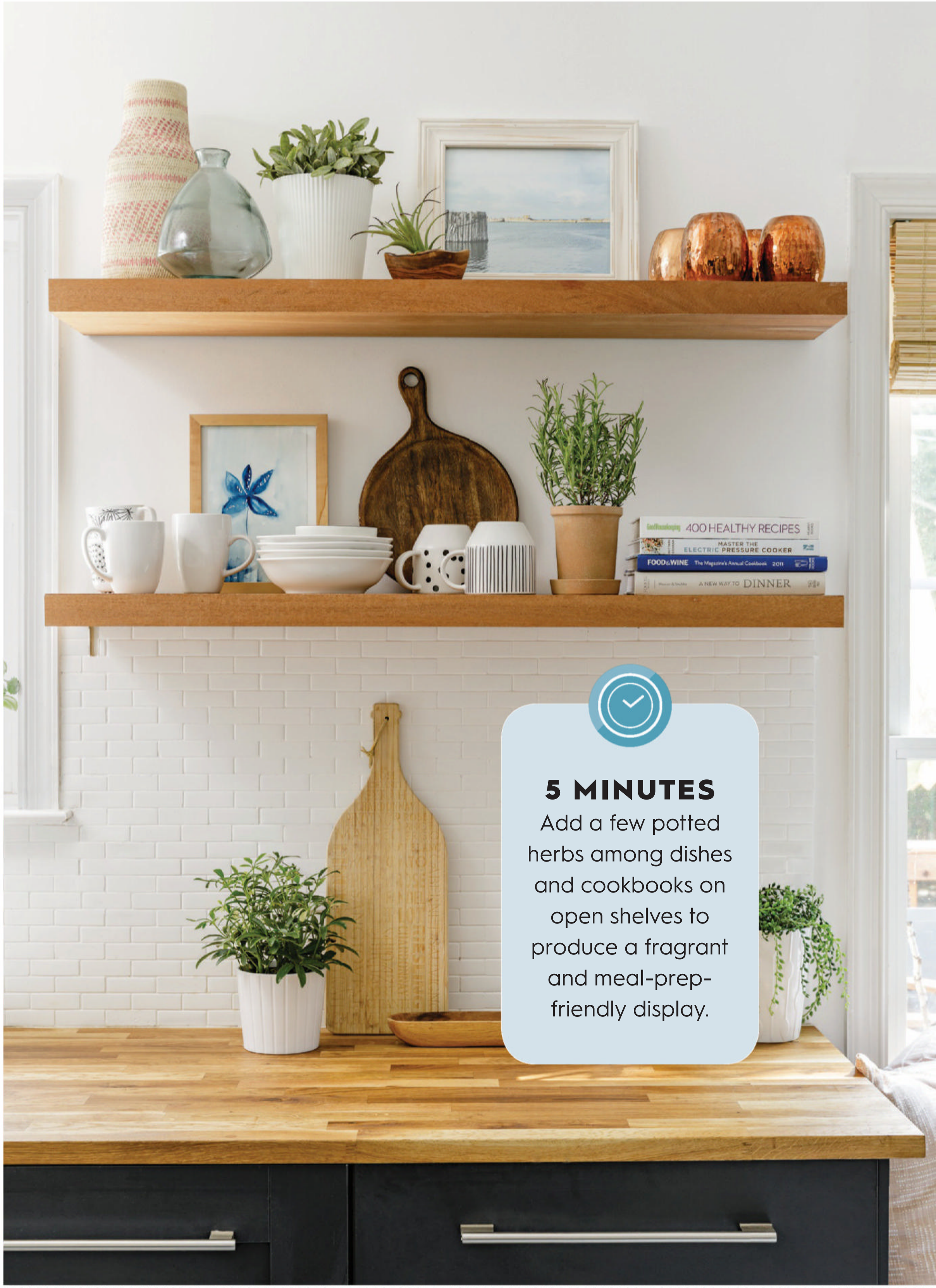
MAXIMIZING SPACE This kitchen puts wall space around the fridge to work with cabinets that extend to the ceiling. Use high cabinets to store seldom-used cooking gear or bulk paper supplies. Keep a step stool handy for easy access.

60 MINUTES

Install pullout shelves in islands and lower cabinets so you don't have to stoop or get on your knees to locate cookware and small appliances.

ORGANIZATION RULES in this not-so-big Kitchen No. 2—thanks to a smart layout and savvy storage choices. But the truth is, it took two separate makeovers to achieve nirvana. At first the homeowners swapped builder-grade oak cabinets for higher-end models—including ceiling-high wall units and a base cabinet for the new apron-front sink. They also built a DIY window seat with hidden storage in the adjacent breakfast area. Seven years later the couple was ready to upgrade the kitchen's look and feel. Along with new flooring, they installed butcher block counters, including an island overhang to supersize the unit's work surface. Newly painted-white upper cabinets were grounded with base cabinets and an island painted dark blue to hide scuff marks. Now the kitchen suits their work style to a T. RESOURCES BEGIN ON *PAGE 93*.



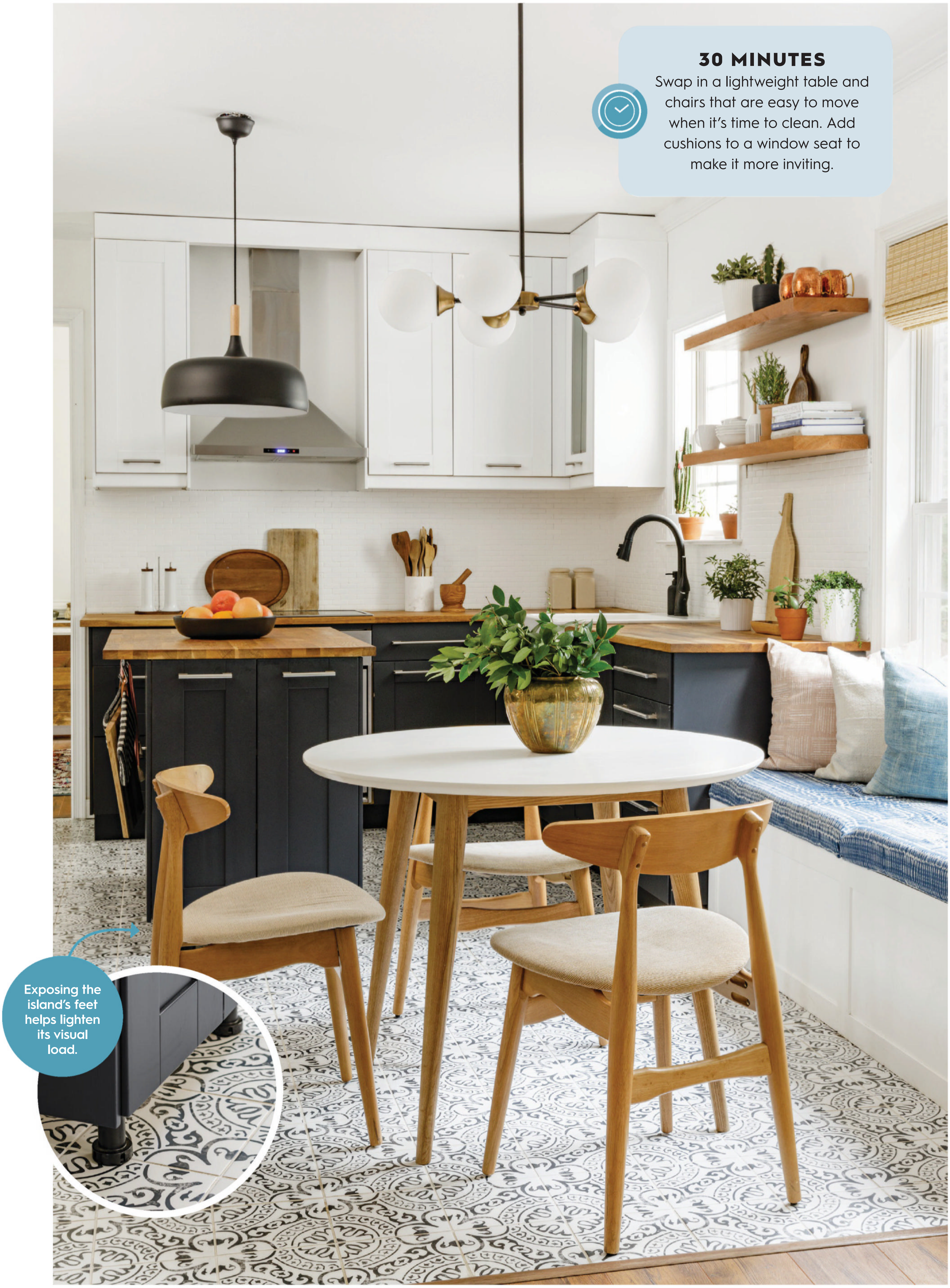


5 MINUTES
Add a few potted herbs among dishes and cookbooks on open shelves to produce a fragrant and meal-prep-friendly display.

GO-TO GEAR Mounting a metal towel bar beneath the island overhang, *left,* helps the island work harder. Inexpensive S hooks keep the hot pads and cutting board visible and accessible.

EASY UPDATES The homeowners brushed oil-base primer and latex paint on glass tiles and grout, *above,* to create a light, bright backsplash that's effortless to clean. Floating shelves replaced a cabinet to open up the space.

HIGH AND LOW Taking cabinets to the ceiling, *opposite,* boosts storage capacity without eating up floor space. The window seat's top opens to reveal small appliances that once languished in the garage.



30 MINUTES

Swap in a lightweight table and chairs that are easy to move when it's time to clean. Add cushions to a window seat to make it more inviting.

Exposing the island's feet helps lighten its visual load.

Persuasion
Jane Austen
SENSE AND SENSIBILITY
JANE AUSTEN

BEDROOM, BATH + CLOSET

Organize items in personal spaces to find what you need before bed and on busy mornings.

64 Goal: Streamline Morning Prep
66 Goal: Plan Your Wardrobe
68 Fast + Easy Fixes: Bathroom Vanity
70 Clothes Overhaul

RESOURCES BEGIN ON *PAGE 93.*

Johanna SILVER
THE BOLD DRY GA
ART and the GARDENER
ALICE BORCHARDT DRAGON
The Story of Forgetting
Stefan Merrill Block
THE BOOK OF LIFE
COAST TO COAST
MAN MA
Ken Baker

SMART FUNCTION
When space is limited, opt for multifunctional products. The alarm clock, *above,* also serves as a sound machine, wake-up light, and phone charger.

PRODUCER: KATE MALO; PHOTOGRAPHER: MARTY BALDWIN

GOAL

STREAMLINE MORNING PREP

Turn getting ready into a relaxing routine by keeping things simple, focusing only on the essentials, and placing everything within reach.

☑ **GET BACK TO BASICS** when it comes to your makeup. Lightly apply a tinted moisturizer, then blend in concealer under your eyes. Define your brows with a brow pencil, swipe on a neutral eye shadow, and add a coat of mascara. Use a daytime pink liquid lipstick that works as a blush too.

☐ **CLEAN THE VANITY** and get rid of old or unused makeup and bath products. Safely dispose of expired medications (search for local disposal sites online). Keep the makeup you use daily within reach—preferably stashed away neatly in a vanity drawer, *below,* rather than on the countertop.

☐ **KEEP ESSENTIALS VISIBLE** so they'll be easy to grab. Items you use multiple times a day can be left on the countertop. Consider making use of available wall space for extra storage too. Hang a slim shelf and hooks, *opposite,* to ensure everyday items like towels and cotton swabs are accessible.

sonia kashuk

ANOTHER GREAT *IDEA*

Do you need a cosmetic organizer you can take with you to the gym or on trips out of town? The Poke A Dot Organizer ($20) will keep everything safely in place thanks to dividers that can be placed horizontally and vertically to fit your specific contents and a locking lid. Stash the slim case in a vanity drawer and simply lock on the lid when it's time to hit the road. ***pokeadotorganizer.com***

Choose hooks with monograms so everyone will remember which towel is theirs.

> "If there are any products in the bathroom that you don't use, let them go. More isn't more if it's slowing you down."
>
> **—ANDREW MELLEN, PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZER**

GOAL

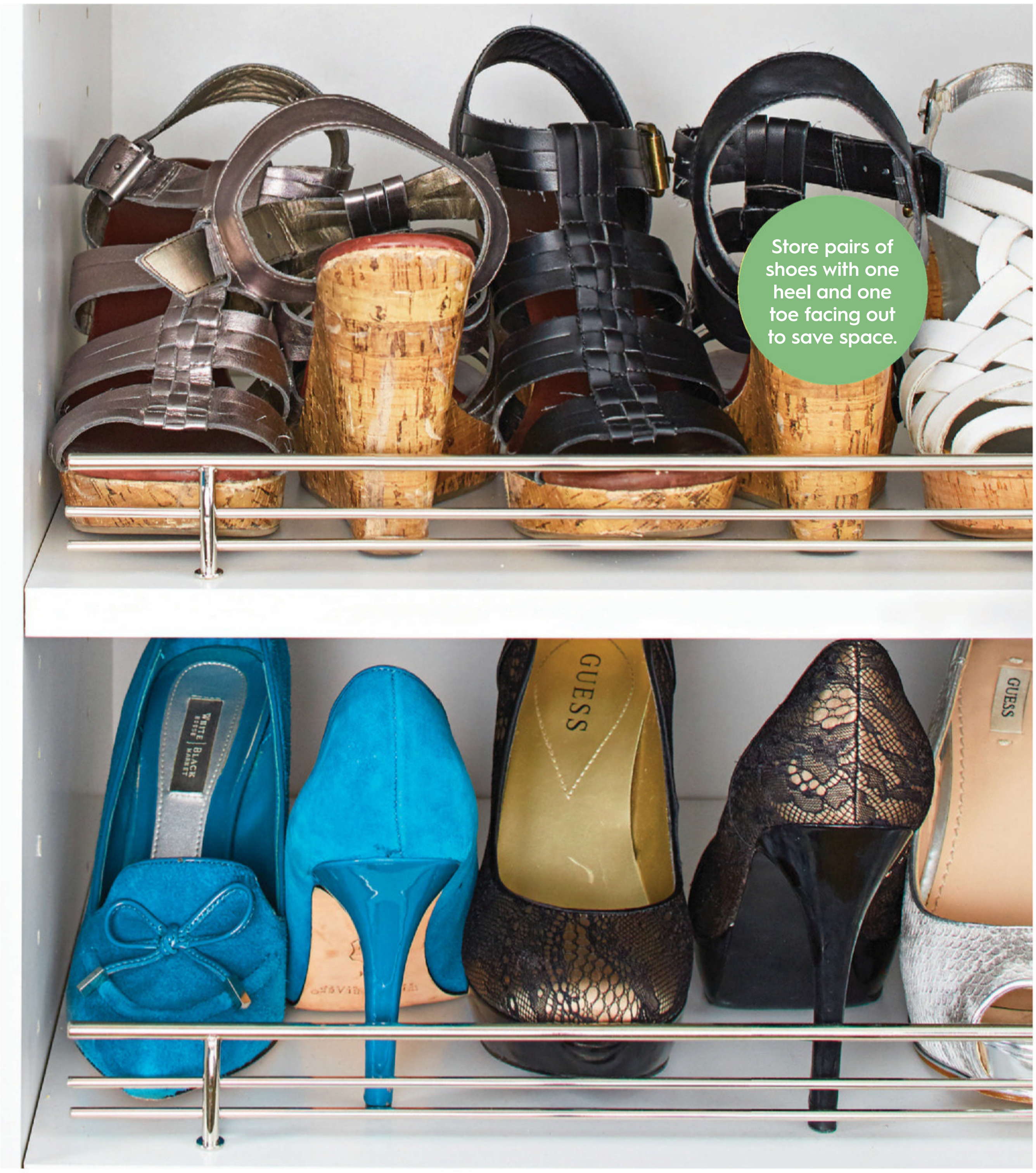
PLAN YOUR WARDROBE

Need more time in the morning? Narrow down your clothes to the ones you truly wear to turn getting dressed into an effortless task.

☑ **TRY A CAPSULE WARDROBE** by paring down your clothes to essential, well-made basics in a single mix-and-match color palette, *opposite.* You will have multiple outfit options yet fewer clothes to go through every day. "Limit your wardrobe to a set of nine outfits, work or casual, that you look great in, and rotate them," efficiency expert Laura Vanderkam says.

☐ **THINK AHEAD** and assemble the outfit you plan to wear the night before, including undergarments and shoes. Hang your outfit on a hook or valet rod, *opposite inset,* to help minimize wrinkles.

☐ **SIMPLIFY SHOES** by limiting your choices, *right.* Most people wear only four pairs of shoes frequently and waste time trying to find them. Identify your favorites, as well as those worn for a specific purpose or activity, and give away the rest.



Store pairs of shoes with one heel and one toe facing out to save space.

ANOTHER GREAT *IDEA*

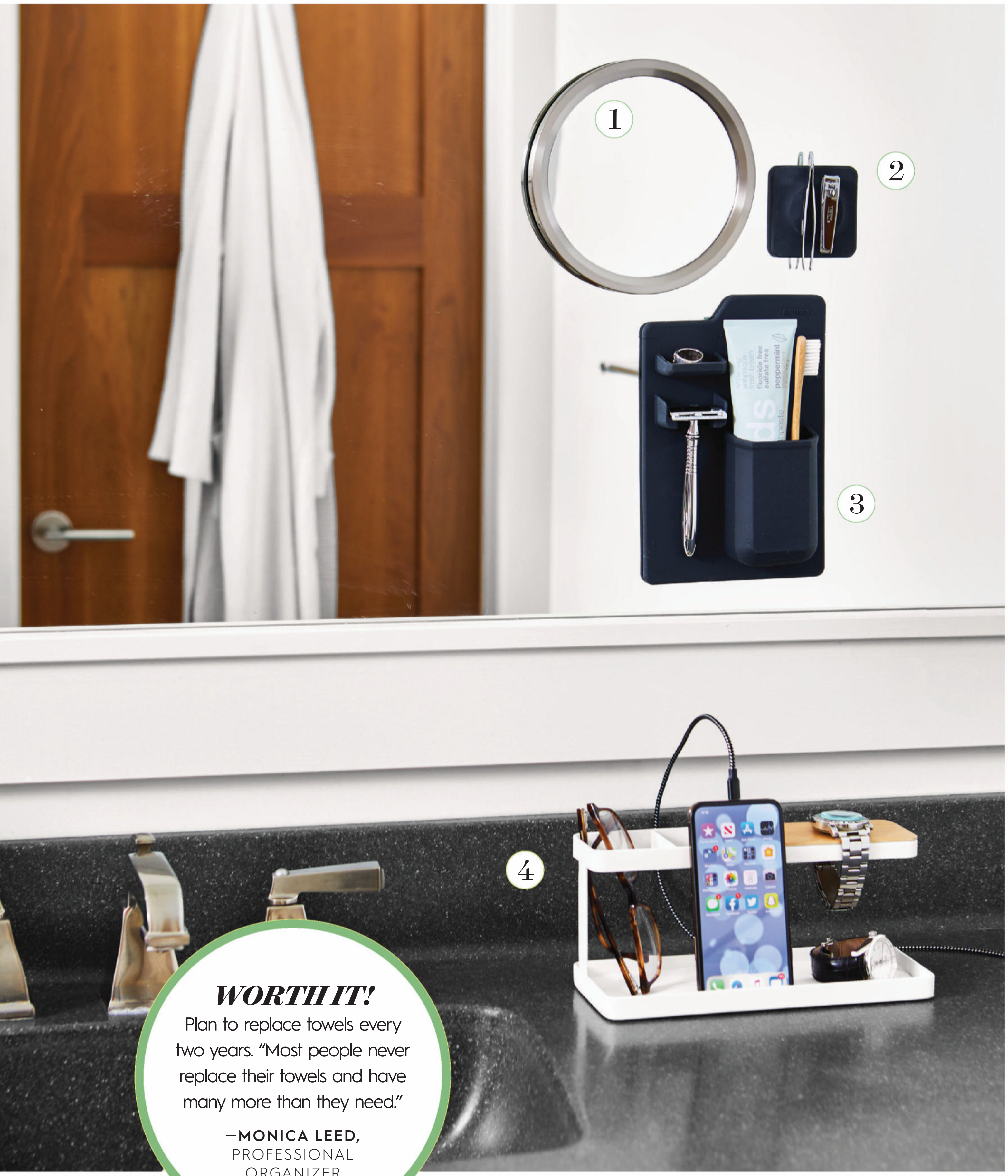
As you're organizing your clothes, take time to get your accessories in order too. Professional organizer Anna Bauer, owner of Sorted by Anna, says, "If you can't see it, you will likely forget you own it!" Lay out purses, belts, hats, ties, etc., on your bed to identify the best. Place the keepers in organizers or install hooks to hold belts and scarves, making each item easy to see.

FAST + EASY FIXES

BATHROOM VANITY

Feel the relief of stress-free daily prepping with accessible containers that tame clutter.

WRITER AND PRODUCER **MOLLY SINNETT** PHOTOGRAPHERS **JASON DONNELLY** AND **JAY WILDE**



1 IN FULL VIEW

A magnifying mirror speeds up the grooming process. Position it on the mirror or wall with hook-and-loop fasteners so you can pull it off to hold closer when needed.

2 STICK TO IT

Use a magnetic pad to hold high-use items like tweezers and clippers and stop digging through drawers to find them.

3 EASY TO REACH

This guy-friendly, repositionable catchall takes messy stuff off the counter with designated places for a ring, razor, toothbrush, and toothpaste.

4 GATHERING PLACE

Streamline the countertop with a multilevel valet that offers spots for jewelry, glasses, and a phone.

WORTH IT!

Plan to replace towels every two years. "Most people never replace their towels and have many more than they need."

—**MONICA LEED,**
PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZER

hair clips
samples
5

5 LAYERS OF ORGANIZATION

Gather similar items under the sink in small drawers. “Stackable bins and baskets can help you keep all the items under the sink organized and grouped properly and will help keep spills and leaks inside the cabinet,” say productivity experts S.J. Scott and Barrie Davenport in *10-Minute Declutter.* Add labels to opaque containers so you can locate things quickly.

6 LEVEL UP

Kitchen organizers do double duty in the bathroom. A sliding pullout shelf system fits around plumbing and makes sure nothing gets lost in the back of the cabinet. Atop the pullout, a ceramic egg tray corrals jewelry faves.

7 BRIGHT IDEA

Prevent items from being lost in darkness with stick-on lights. They’re easy to install and turn on when they detect motion or with a tap. Also avoid overfilling your cabinet with super-size bath products that clutter up the cabinet. In *Start with Your Sock Drawer,* professional organizer Vicky Silverthorn says, “Be strict when you shop. Don’t be tempted by big bulk offers, and don’t overbuy.”

CLOTHES *overhaul*

HER SIDE

60 MINUTES
Closet packed? Time to purge. Schedule an hour to tackle as much as you can. Have a donate box and a trash bag for items you don't need.

30 MINUTES
Swap out a mishmash of hangers for space-saving slim ones so you will spend less time fumbling to find your desired outfit.

A good day starts with getting dressed without stress. Turn your closet into a haven by arranging it so everything is easy to find—and put away.

WRITER **SAMANTHA S. THORPE** PRODUCER **LESLIE POYZER** PHOTOGRAPHER **MARTY BALDWIN**

IMAGINE WALKING INTO YOUR CLOSET and being able to pull together the perfect outfit in no time without tripping over castoffs. Professional organizer Deborah J. Cabral recommends installing a DIY or custom closet system to maximize your wall space and allow you to see everything. (We chose a coated wire rack from Rubbermaid.) Then follow Cabral's smart time-saving strategies to maintain order. Perform a seasonal inventory to eliminate items you no longer wear or that don't fit (be ruthless!). Hang like items together from light to dark and short to long. Stash out-of-season clothes in labeled clear bins on the highest shelf so you never have to push them aside. Stack folded sweaters and cardigans by color. Use dividers and organizers to separate accessories so they're easy to grab. Store workout clothes all together, and keep a hamper nearby to collect dirty clothes.

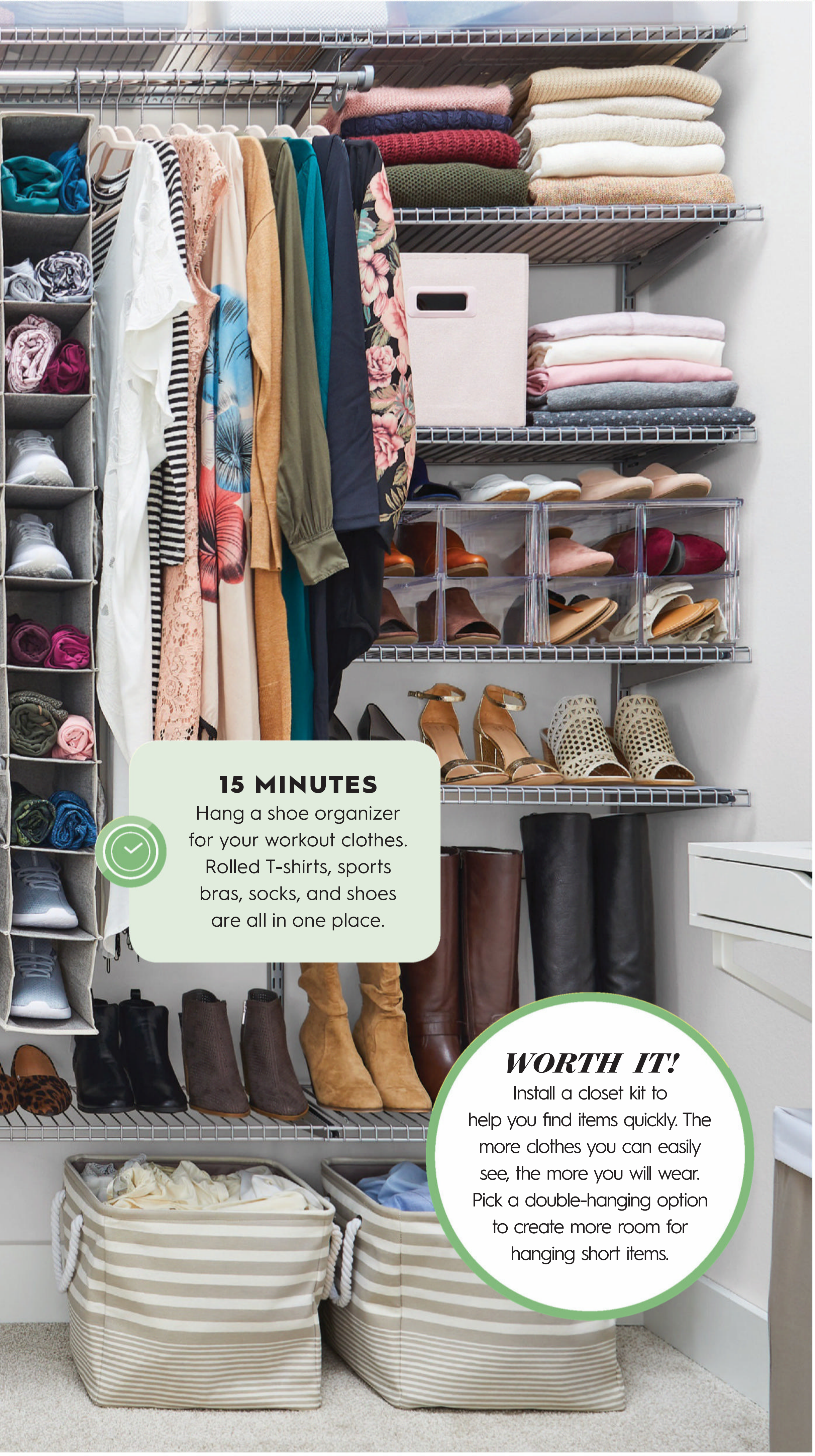
RESOURCES BEGIN ON *PAGE 93*.

A TALL ORDER

To maximize vertical space and incorporate double rods, we hung the closet system, *left,* higher on the wall than is standard: 86½ inches above the floor.

IN PLAIN SIGHT

Employ clear shoeboxes to stack sandals and delicate pairs, *below.*



15 MINUTES

Hang a shoe organizer for your workout clothes. Rolled T-shirts, sports bras, socks, and shoes are all in one place.

WORTH IT!

Install a closet kit to help you find items quickly. The more clothes you can easily see, the more you will wear. Pick a double-hanging option to create more room for hanging short items.

SMART STRATEGIES
Piles of sweaters and sweatshirts stay neat and tidy when they're separated by shelf dividers, *below.* Mesh bins, meanwhile, help air out and contain workout clothes, *inset.*

LINE THEM UP
Organize shoes by use. Sandals are stashed on the top row, *right,* casual shoes and tennis shoes are in the middle, and less-used dress shoes fill out the bottom. If dress shoes are worn more often, swap them with the sandals.

15 MINUTES

Roll your T-shirts to fit more of them into drawers. You'll be able to see them all at once and will likely end up with fewer wrinkles too.

DIY CLOSET SYSTEMS

Affordable kits allow you to hang rods, shelves, and components without a professional installer. Remember the following when shopping for a system.

FLEXIBILITY
Does the kit come with adjustable or telescoping parts? Will it allow for short- and long-hanging items? Be aware some kits require cutting to fit and others don't.

STYLE
Kits come in coated wire, melamine, faux wood, and wood. Decide on the look you want and go see it in a home improvement store or showroom. What sounds good online may not end up having the finish you expected when the kits arrive.

COMPONENT OPTIONS
Find out what ready-made add-ons are available for organizing shoes, accessories, and clothing. Does the system allow you to mix and match components as needed?

VISIBILITY
Choose a kit that will help you find items quickly—the more clothes you can easily see, the more you will wear.

INSTALLATION
Ensure your selected system will fit your closet size and you feel comfortable installing it. Verify you have all hardware, parts, and tools before you start.

HIS SIDE

DOUBLE UP

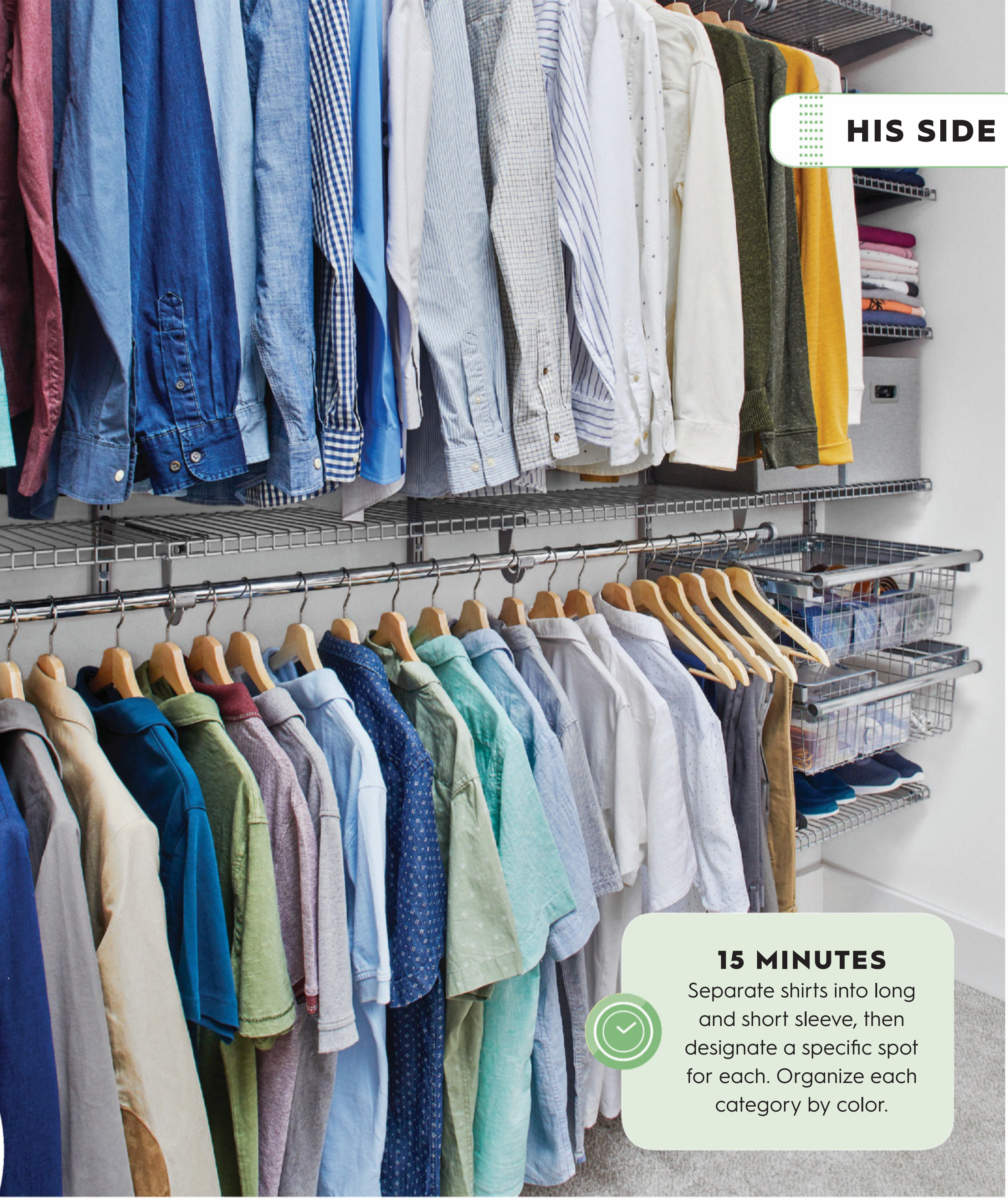
Two rods work best for all short-hanging demands, *right.* Wooden hangers take up more room but will help keep weightier shirts, jackets, and suit pants wrinkle free.

ANCHOR IT

Adjustable shelves, *below,* bookend the double hanging rods and create a landing zone for folded clothing, shoes, and accessories. A valet rod, *inset,* pulls out when needed to try out shirt, pant, and tie combos.

SORT IT OUT

Customizable drawer organizers, *below right,* simplify selecting a tie or belt. Clear shoeboxes organize shoe- and clothing-care tools.



15 MINUTES

Separate shirts into long and short sleeve, then designate a specific spot for each. Organize each category by color.

Adjustable dividers sort neatly rolled ties and prevent snags from belts.

04
2023
April
SUNDAY
MONDAY
TUESDAY
WEDNESDAY
THURSDAY
FRIDAY
SATURDAY
Dual Duty

WORK+HOBBY

Smart storage keeps supplies at your fingertips so you can complete projects and chores with ease.

76 Goal: Clean Faster
78 Fast + Easy Fixes: Mobile Office
80 Fast + Easy Fixes: Utility Closet
82 Simplify Laundry
84 Garage Tune-Up

RESOURCES BEGIN ON *PAGE 93*.

REPURPOSE IT
Look around your house for potential organizers. Here, extra kitchen bowls help corral threads and buttons.

moda FABRICS + SUPPLIES www.modafabrics.com
ALLEN THE UNOFFICIAL BOOK OF CRICUT CRAFTS
Crochet Little Heroes ORSI FARKASVÖLGYI B.E.S
Watercolor Success in Four Steps Marina Bakasova DESIGN ORIGINALS
The Yoga Anatomy Coloring Book KELLY SOLLOWAY Get Creative 6
first time KNITTING THE ABSOLUTE BEGINNER'S GUIDE

CRAFT CADDIES
Designate separate caddies for different types of crafting supplies. This one holds colorful baker's twine. Another one can round up ribbon.

PRODUCER: KATE MALO; PHOTOGRAPHER: MARTY BALDWIN

"It is so helpful to have your to-do cleaning list written down. Otherwise it's easy to ignore or forget. If you have it on paper—even virtual paper—it'll help you stay on task."

—MELISSA MAKER, AUTHOR OF *CLEAN MY SPACE*

GOAL

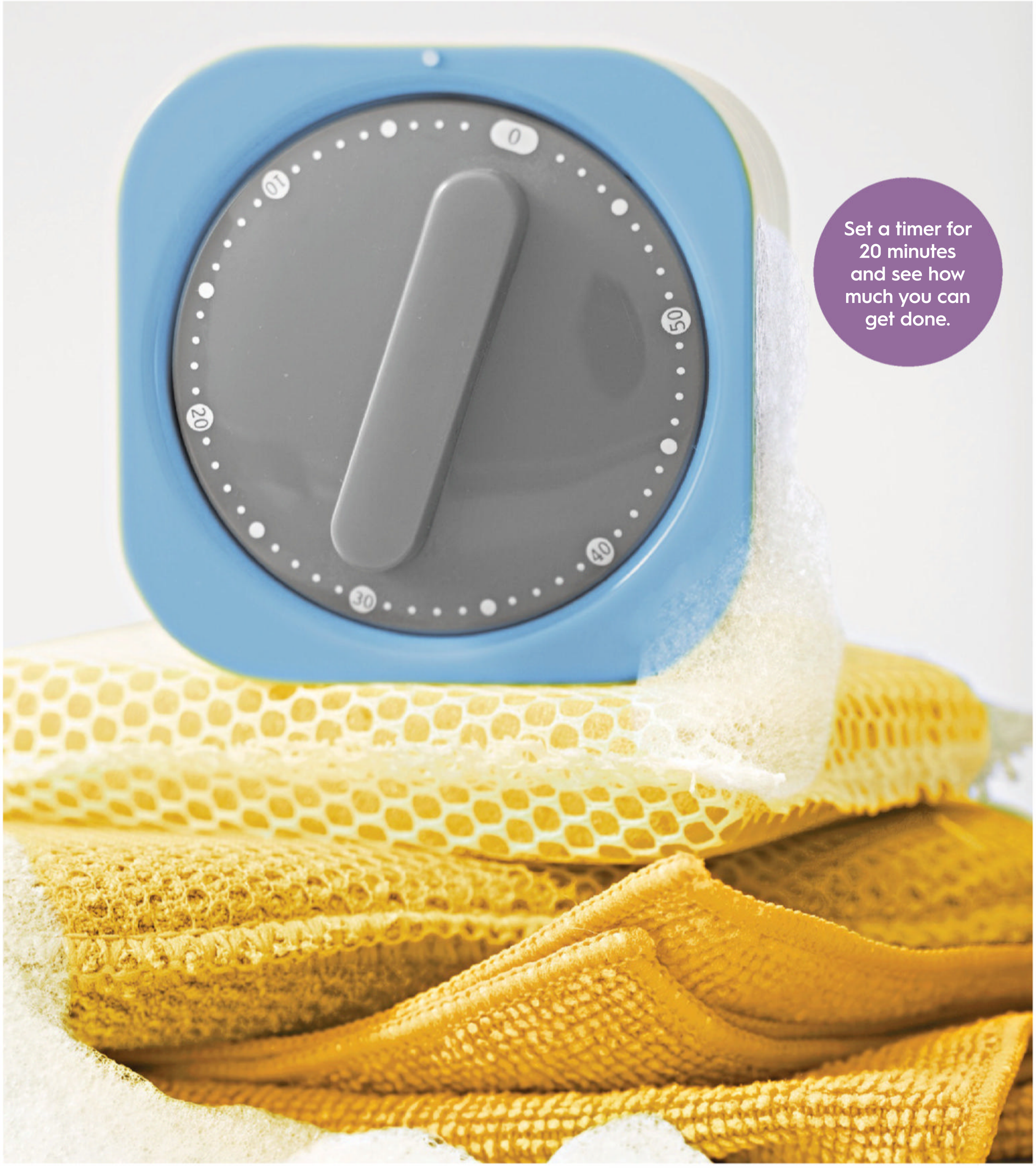
CLEAN FASTER

Instead of getting your entire house spic-and-span in a daunting whole-day affair, focus on small jobs you can complete in minutes.

☑ **CORRAL GEAR** by making up a cleaning caddy that has all the supplies you need. You can put together a general one, *opposite,* or create one with specialty supplies for specific spaces like the kitchen or bath. “Look for a caddy that will easily fit in the space you intend to keep it,” cleaning expert Becky Rapinchuk says.

☐ **CLEAN SURFACES** regularly. Wipe down kitchen counters, the sink, all appliance handles, knobs, and switchplates with a microfiber cloth and your favorite disinfectant or a cleaning wipe. Then tackle bathroom surfaces, including the mirrors, and wipe down all tables—from the dining room to the living room to the entry.

☐ **BE EFFICIENT** and regularly empty the vacuum bag or canister to improve suction. Ask everyone to take off shoes when entering to minimize dirt coming in. Have a vacuum for each level of your house so you don’t have to lug one around.



Set a timer for 20 minutes and see how much you can get done.

ANOTHER GREAT *IDEA*

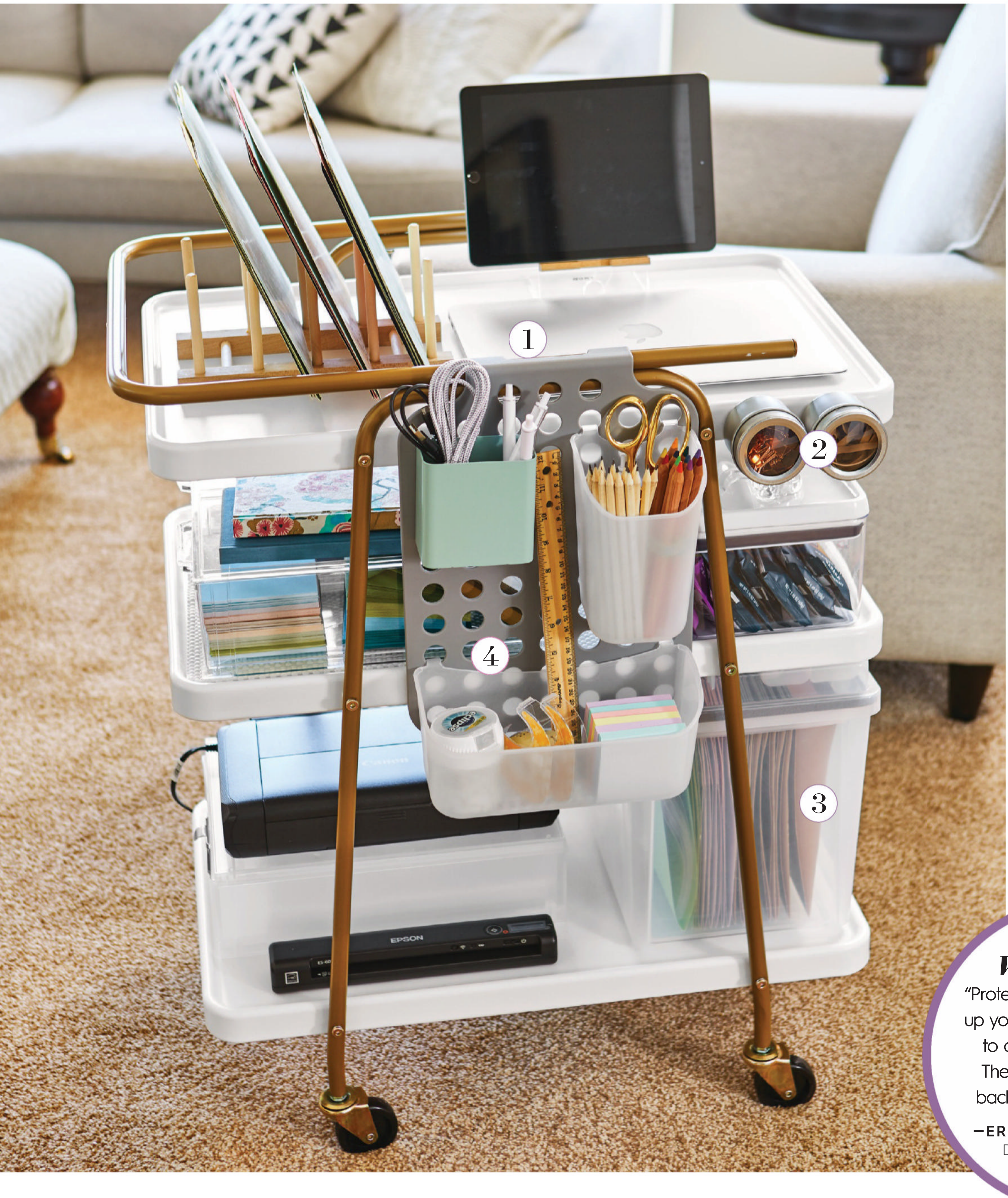
Keep cleaning supplies organized and portable with a 3-section Utility Bucket ($22) featuring an integrated handle. This design holds bottles upright and includes a draining slot for sponges. ***containerstore.com***

FAST + EASY FIXES

MOBILE OFFICE

Work efficiently without an official home office. A well-stocked cart puts supplies within reach, whenever and wherever.

WRITER AND PRODUCER **MOLLY SINNETT** PHOTOGRAPHER **JASON DONNELLY**



1 THE REAL DISH

Turn a wooden dish rack into a file organizer. Secure the rack with double-sided tape so it doesn't slide when you're on the go.

2 METAL METTLE

A metal cart comes with benefits beyond sturdy construction. Magnetic organizers, such as spice tins, hold clips and rubber bands and can be placed just about anywhere.

3 CLEAR POSSIBILITIES

Quickly find office supplies in see-through drawers and containers.

4 CART-SIDE CADDY

Create ride-along storage by repurposing a shower caddy. Pens and pencils are right where you need them.

WORTH IT!

"Protect your data by backing up your computer's hard drive to an external hard drive. Then set up an automatic backup to a cloud service."

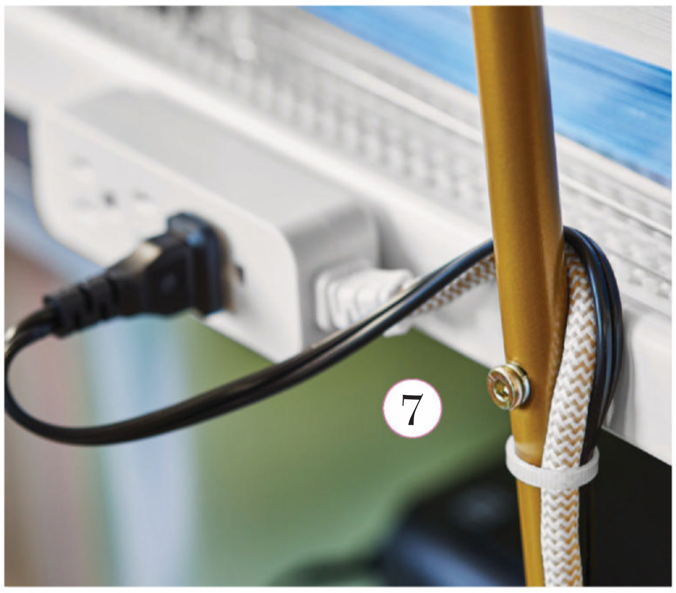
—**ERIN ROONEY DOLAND,**
DECLUTTER EXPERT

5 STAND-UP DESIGN

Sometimes a laptop isn't enough. Create a spot for an extra screen, whether it's a tablet or a monitor. Choose a sturdy stand that can weather regular use.

6 NEARBY NOSH

Snacks are a must in any office. A container with cut-out handles will ensure your goodies are always easy to grab.



7 THAT'S A WRAP

Manage cords and provide power with a well-placed power strip. Attach it securely to the cart and keep cords in check with zip ties.

8 OFFICE MATES

It can't be called an office without printing capabilities. A compact wireless printer and mini scanner do the job without stealing space.

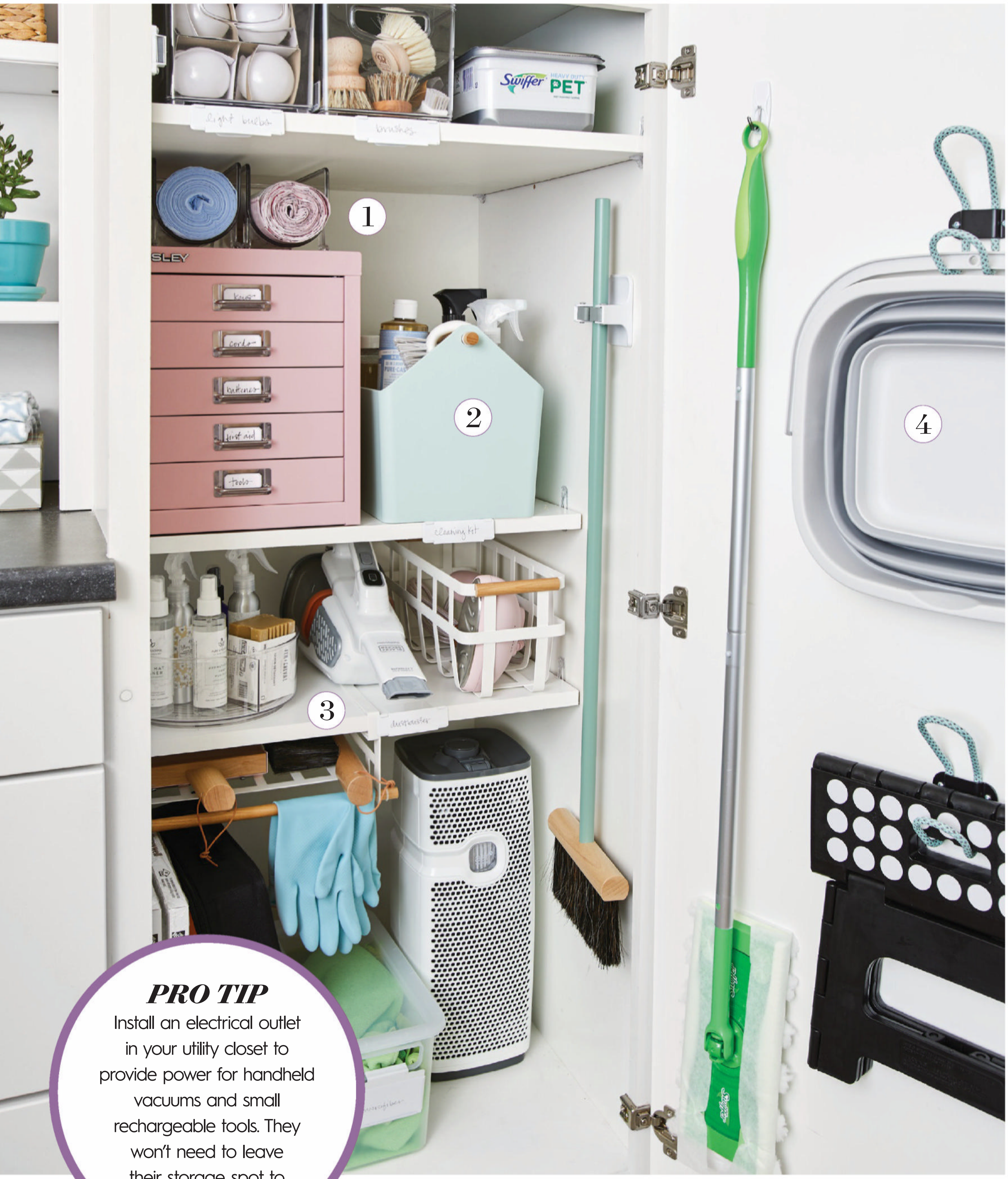
RESOURCES BEGIN ON *PAGE 93.*

FAST + EASY FIXES

UTILITY CLOSET

Save time with these tips that will ensure your utility closet works tirelessly while staying tidy.

WRITER AND PRODUCER **MOLLY SINNETT** PHOTOGRAPHER **JASON DONNELLY**



PRO TIP

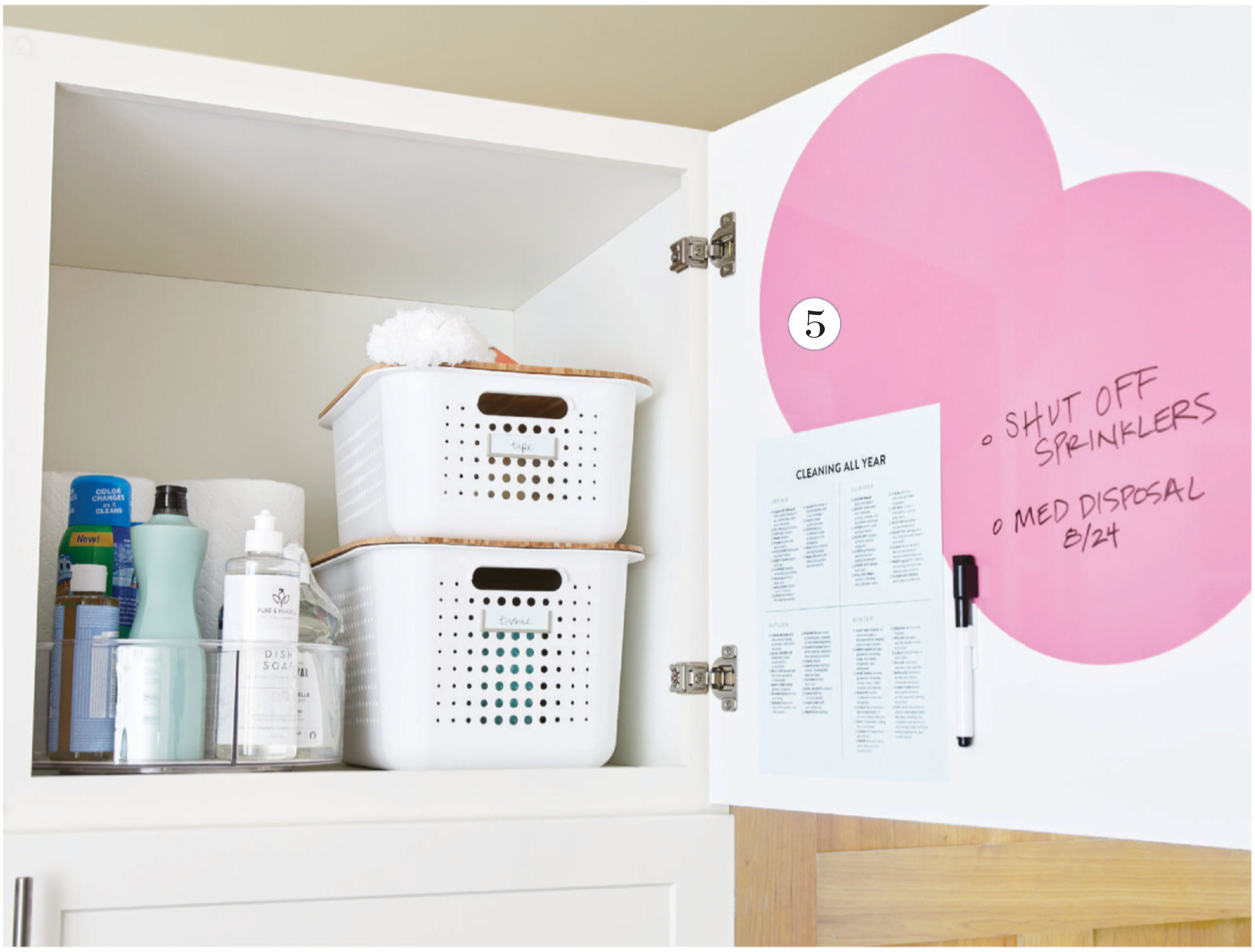
Install an electrical outlet in your utility closet to provide power for handheld vacuums and small rechargeable tools. They won't need to leave their storage spot to charge up.

1 ROLL CONTROL Stackable acrylic wine storage holders are ideal for managing rolls of trash bags or hand towels.

2 AT THE READY A grab-and-go caddy filled with your top cleaning supplies—from sprays to scrubbers—is always ready to travel to where the work is. Keep it at an easy-to-reach height, and faithfully restock it when items run out.

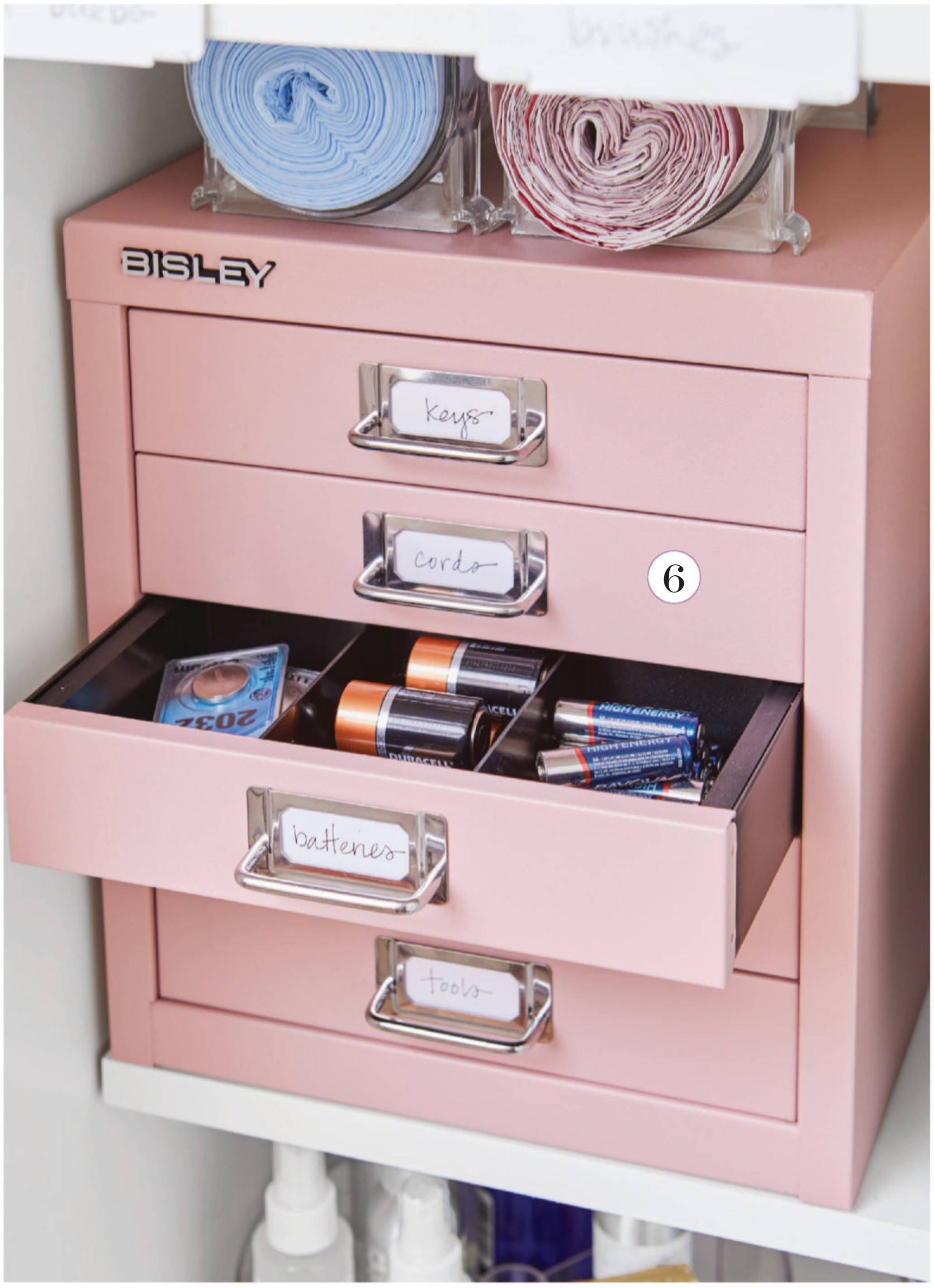
3 SPIN DOCTOR Versatile lazy Susans can help make sure every corner of a utility closet gets used. This high-side version designed for pantries also works great for holding cleaning supplies upright.

4 FLAT FUNCTION A collapsible bucket and footstool are the ultimate space-savers. Hang them on the interior of a closet door to utilize otherwise overlooked real estate.



5 MEMO BOARD

Remember those tasks! Post a schedule for seasonal home maintenance and attach a dry-erase board for immediate must-dos. “To-do lists and checklists are hands down the best tools to motivate you to keep on track no matter the goal you are working toward,” says professional organizer Cassandra Aarssen in *Real Life Organizing.*



6 ROSY RELIABILITY

Stash small, often-used goods like batteries and cords in a mini metal drawer system complete with repositionable dividers. Labels are a must on solid doors so everyone can find what they need and put items back.

7 BONUS SPACES

Take advantage of unused inches with an under-shelf rack. This spot is ideal for a small dustpan and brush. Stash bulky items like air filters, humidifiers, and space heaters in lower cavernous cabinet spaces so they’re out of the way but still easy to spot when they’re needed.

RESOURCES BEGIN ON *PAGE 93.*

SIMPLIFY LAUNDRY

Washing and folding clothes is a constant must-do. But it doesn't have to turn into a stressful burden. Create a system that is part of your routine instead of a last-minute hustle.

DOING THE LAUNDRY CAN SOMETIMES FEEL NEVER-ENDING. How do you make it easier? "The key is to find a system that works for your family and your lifestyle," says declutter expert Dana K. White. "Many people like to do a single load, all the way through, each day. I do much better with a weekly laundry day. Then I have a goal to get the laundry finished so I stay focused."

Organizing expert Kate Martin prefers to set a new frame of mind: "Use your washer and dryer as mini breaks for your busy day." Martin suggests setting a reminder on your phone to add clothes, switch machines, fold, and put everything away. "One load a day gives you healthy stretch breaks, a complete cycle finished, and a more productive schedule," she says.

Pick your routine, then follow these steps for a smoother process:

- Use hampers to presort whites, darks, delicates, and towels.
- Keep it moving. "Don't consider laundry finished until you put it away," professional organizer Janine Adams says.
- Enlist your family's help to bring and return laundry to the correct place. Teach older kids to do their own and help finish loads.

USE RESTRAINT

While it may be tempting to stuff as many clothes into your dryer as possible, it will likely mean your laundry chores will actually take longer. If you fill the dryer all the way full, your clothes are likely to either not get completely dry or come out with larger wrinkles—which will extend your ironing time. Aim to fill your dryer only halfway; this will allow your clothes to move more freely during the drying cycle.

WORTH IT!

Pair folding laundry with something fun, such as listening to a favorite podcast. Happiness expert Gretchen Rubin says, "The trick is to save that podcast for only when you do laundry."

how to get it out
SUBSTANCE
TIMING
CHOCOLATE
COFFEE
TEA
WAX
pink button down
CIRCO.
L 10/12

GIVE EVERY FAMILY MEMBER SUPPLIES

Place a hamper wherever family members change clothes, and provide another hamper for towels and linens. Give everyone their own mesh bag for socks, and attach stain-remover sticks to the hamper so stains can be treated before dirty clothes go in.

MAKE A MENDING KIT

Stash repair essentials—thread, needles, scissors—in the laundry room to take care of any mending right away. Post a stain-treating chart to expedite that process. Supply clothespins or set up a drying rack to facilitate hang drying.

FOLD AND PUT AWAY IMMEDIATELY

As soon as your items are dry, fold them. "I didn't want to do it either," White says, "but this one change makes a huge difference. I fold each item and put it in a stack according to where it will go. Then, before I start working on the next load, I deliver those stacks to their drawers—or have family members do it when they're at home."

STOP WRINKLES

Cut down on ironing chores by folding clothes as soon as they come out of the dryer. For items that need to be hung, professional organizer Lisa Luken suggests running a 10- to 15-minute low-heat dryer cycle, then hanging or draping them over a drying rack.

GARAGE TUNE-UP

WITH SO MUCH EMPTY SPACE, garages are the go-to spot for stashing odds-and-ends, but a messy garage can soon interfere with finishing a quick DIY project or accessing gear for outdoor activities (not to mention parking the car). Dividing this space into sections that work for your household will help you conquer clutter and get your garage in souped-up shape.

Start your garage overhaul by going through its contents. Toss broken items and set aside unused items to donate. Then deal with items you're keeping. Set up zones for sports equipment, gardening gear, tools, and so on. Add rails to walls to maximize vertical storage, and use pegboard and hooks to put tools and cords within reach. Stash chemicals in cabinets. After your system is in place, the whole household should help keep the garage in shape so everyone can find what they need. RESOURCES BEGIN ON *PAGE 93.*

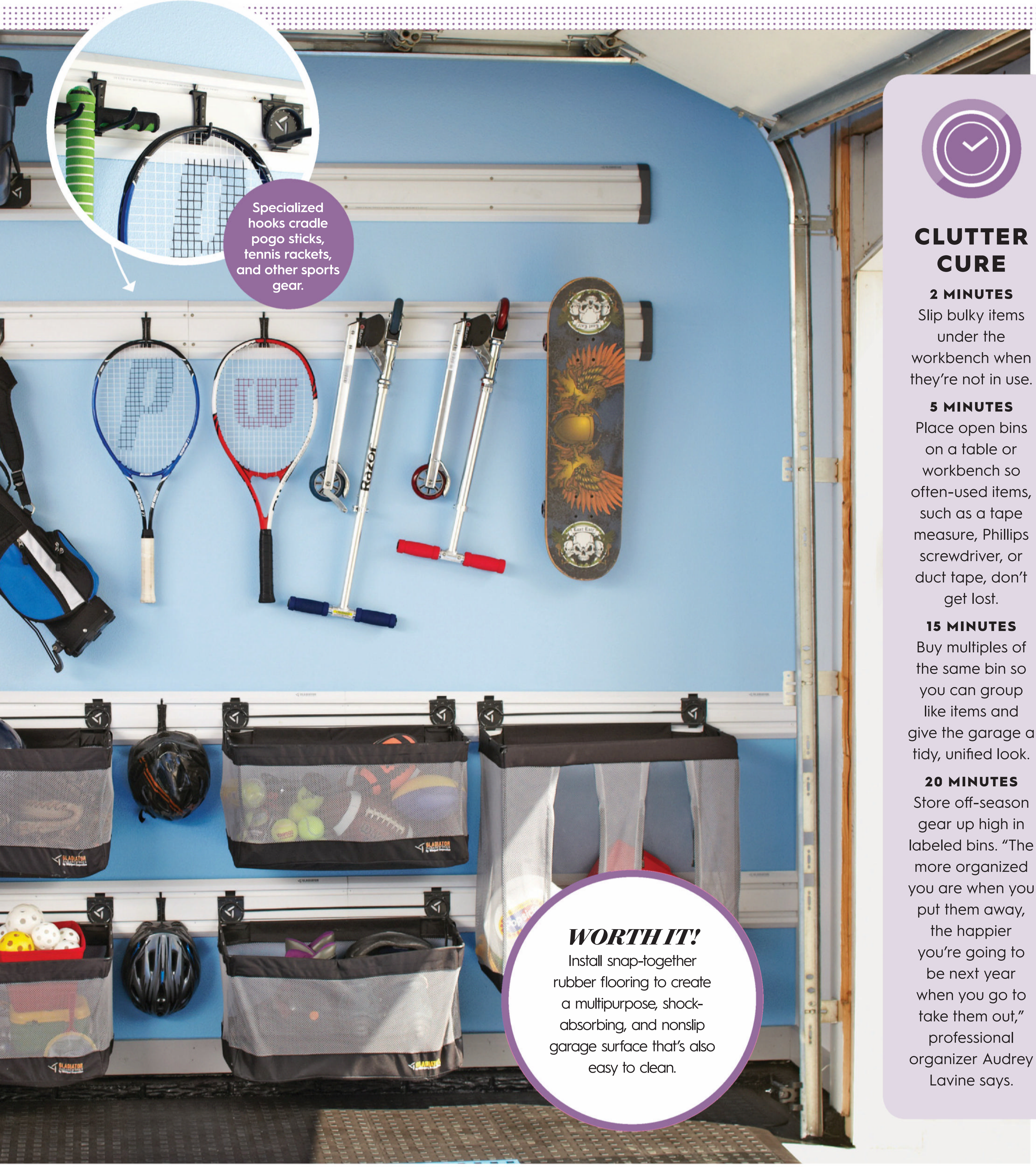
IN GOOD ORDER
Wall-hung cabinets, *below,* offer storage for power tools, boxes of screws and nails, adhesives, clamps, and other fix-it equipment. Cord managers wrap hoses and cords with tangle-free ease on a track mounted to the wall below the workbench.

BOOTS
RIPSTIK
GLADIATOR
Park Tool

MAKE IT VISIBLE
Use rails, hooks, and shelves to get belongings off the floor so you don't have to climb over piles of stuff. Group like items, such as equipment for one sport, in see-through mesh baskets or bins.

More than a parking spot, the garage often serves as a catchall space for lots of gear. Get it in order with a few organizational adjustments.

WRITERS **RACHEL O'BRIEN, MARA BOO,** AND **SARAH HALVERSON** PRODUCER **CATHY KRAMER** PHOTOGRAPHER **JAY WILDE**



Specialized hooks cradle pogo sticks, tennis rackets, and other sports gear.

WORTH IT!

Install snap-together rubber flooring to create a multipurpose, shock-absorbing, and nonslip garage surface that's also easy to clean.

CLUTTER CURE

2 MINUTES

Slip bulky items under the workbench when they're not in use.

5 MINUTES

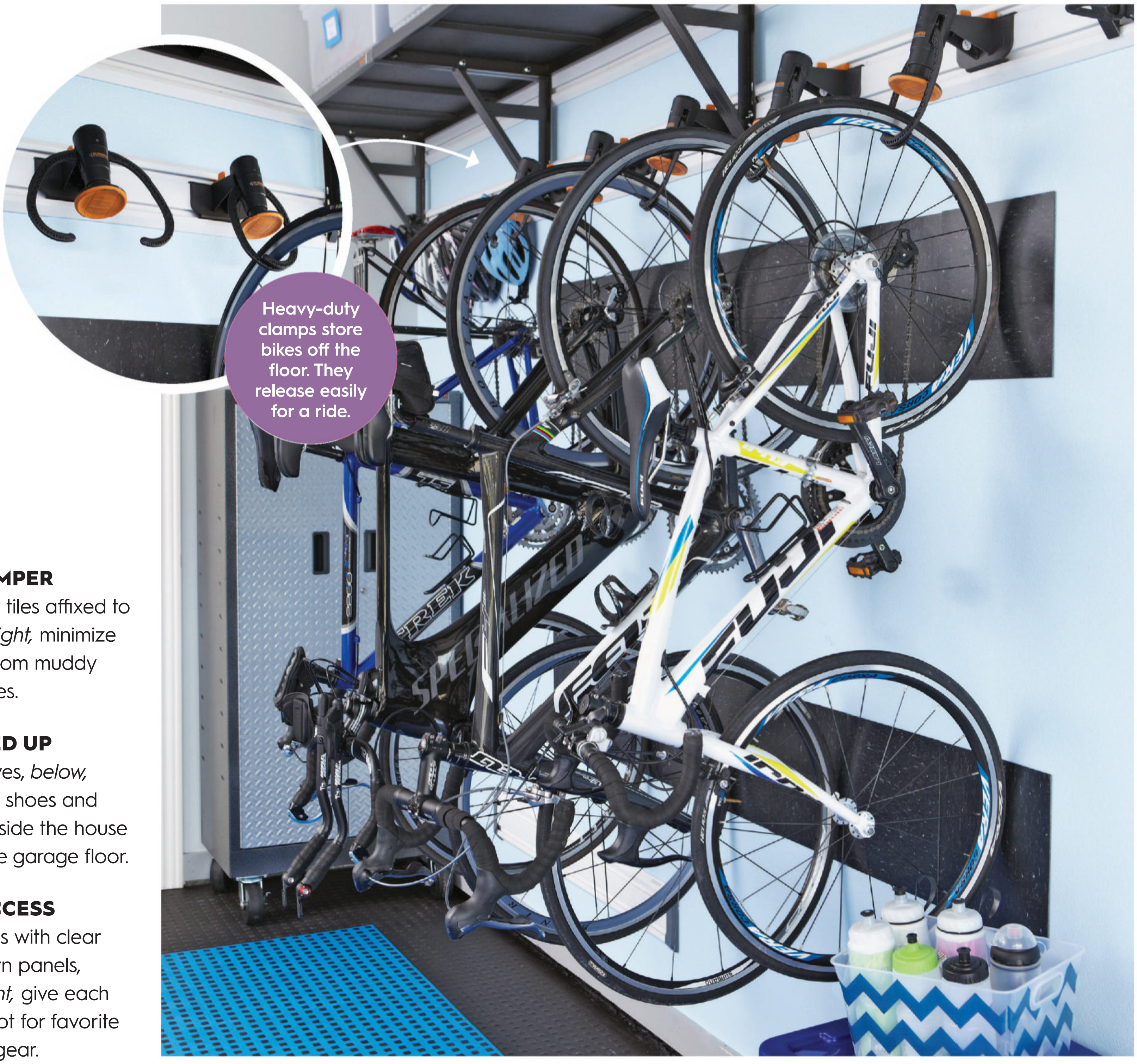
Place open bins on a table or workbench so often-used items, such as a tape measure, Phillips screwdriver, or duct tape, don't get lost.

15 MINUTES

Buy multiples of the same bin so you can group like items and give the garage a tidy, unified look.

20 MINUTES

Store off-season gear up high in labeled bins. "The more organized you are when you put them away, the happier you're going to be next year when you go to take them out," professional organizer Audrey Lavine says.

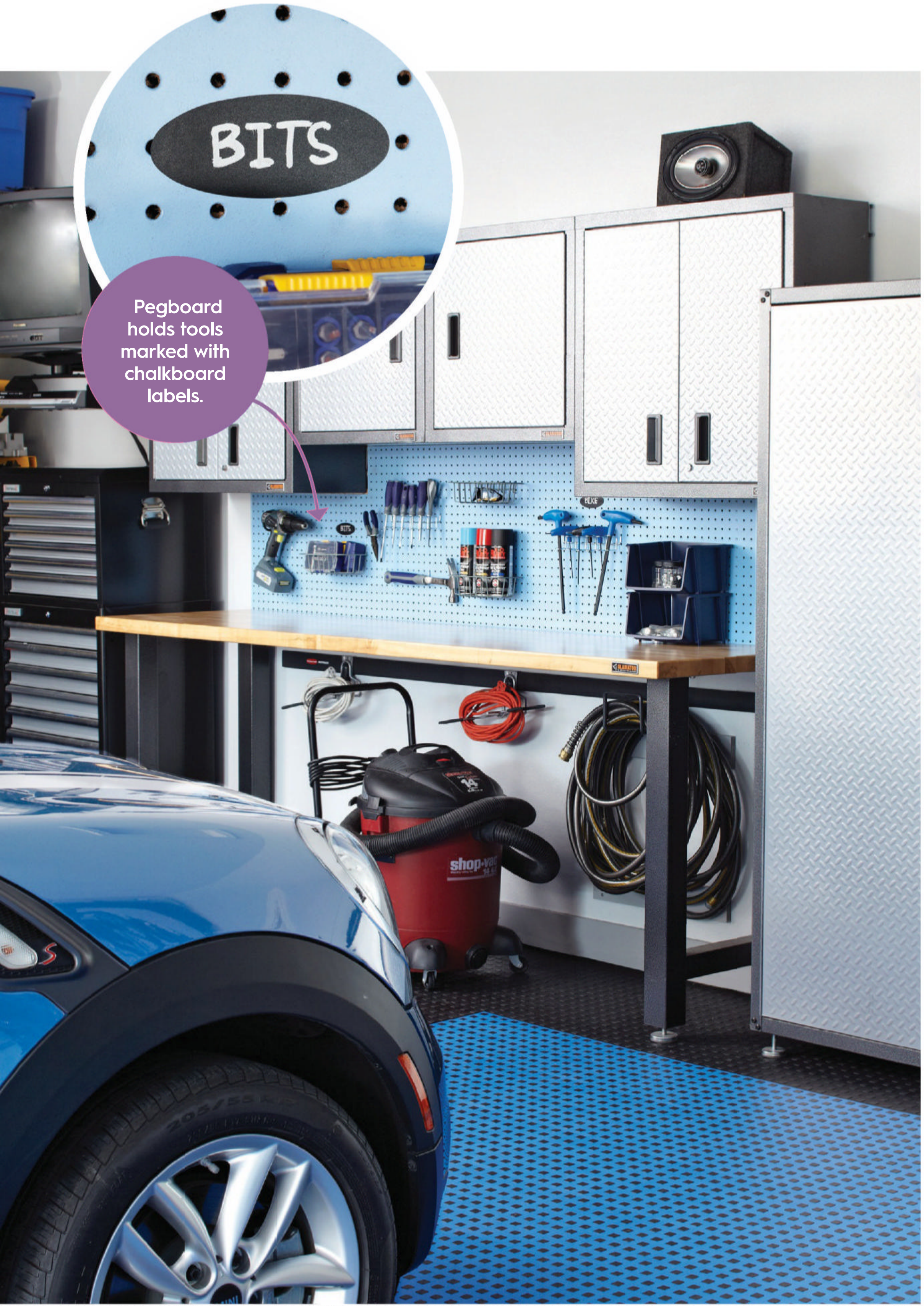


Heavy-duty clamps store bikes off the floor. They release easily for a ride.

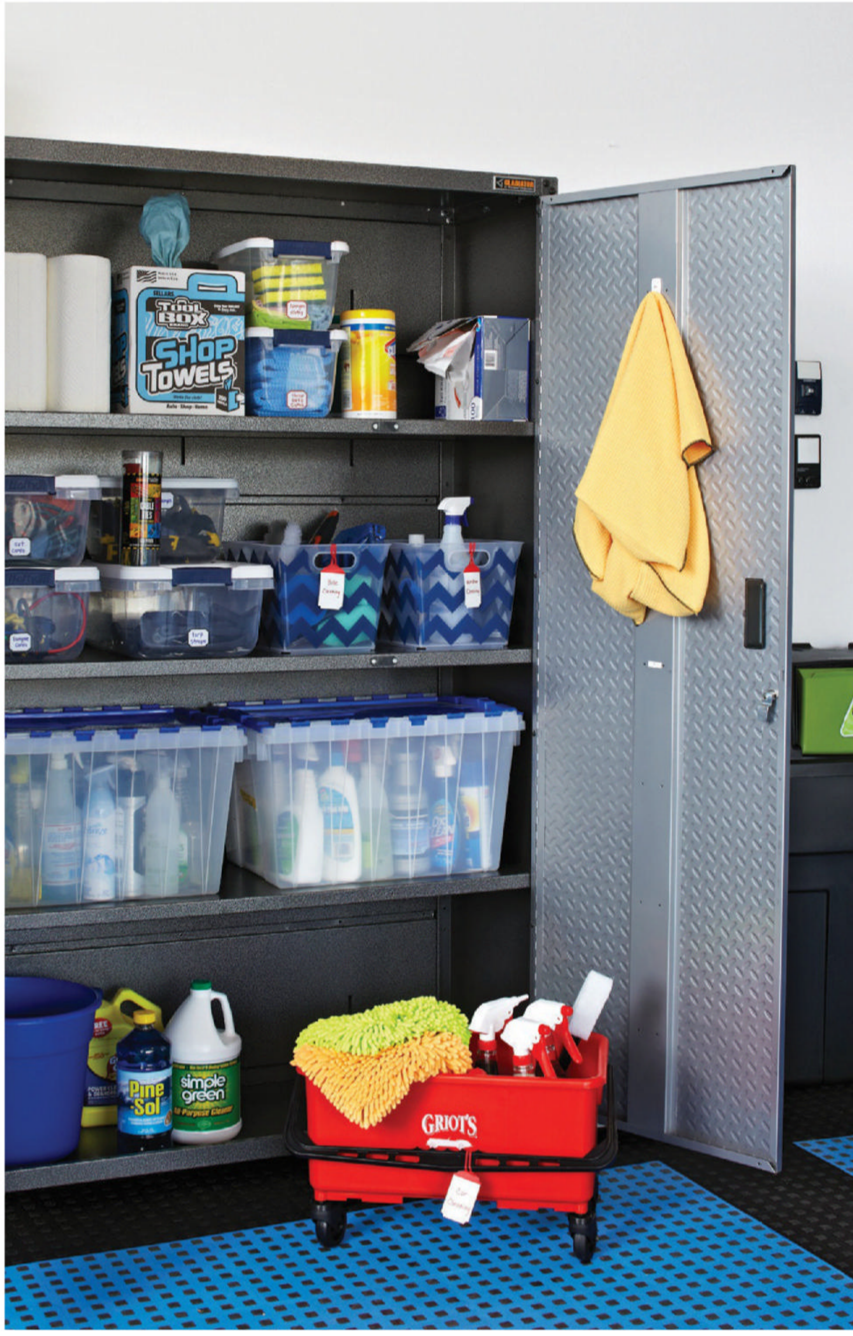
BIKE BUMPER
Vinyl floor tiles affixed to the wall, *right,* minimize marring from muddy bicycle tires.

ALL LINED UP
Wire shelves, *below,* keep dirty shoes and cleats outside the house and off the garage floor.

EASY ACCESS
Sturdy bins with clear drop-down panels, *below right,* give each child a spot for favorite toys and gear.



Pegboard holds tools marked with chalkboard labels.



ON WHEELS
A rolling tool chest to the left of the workbench, *above,* makes transporting tools easy. Speakers atop the cabinets keep the music going while you're working.

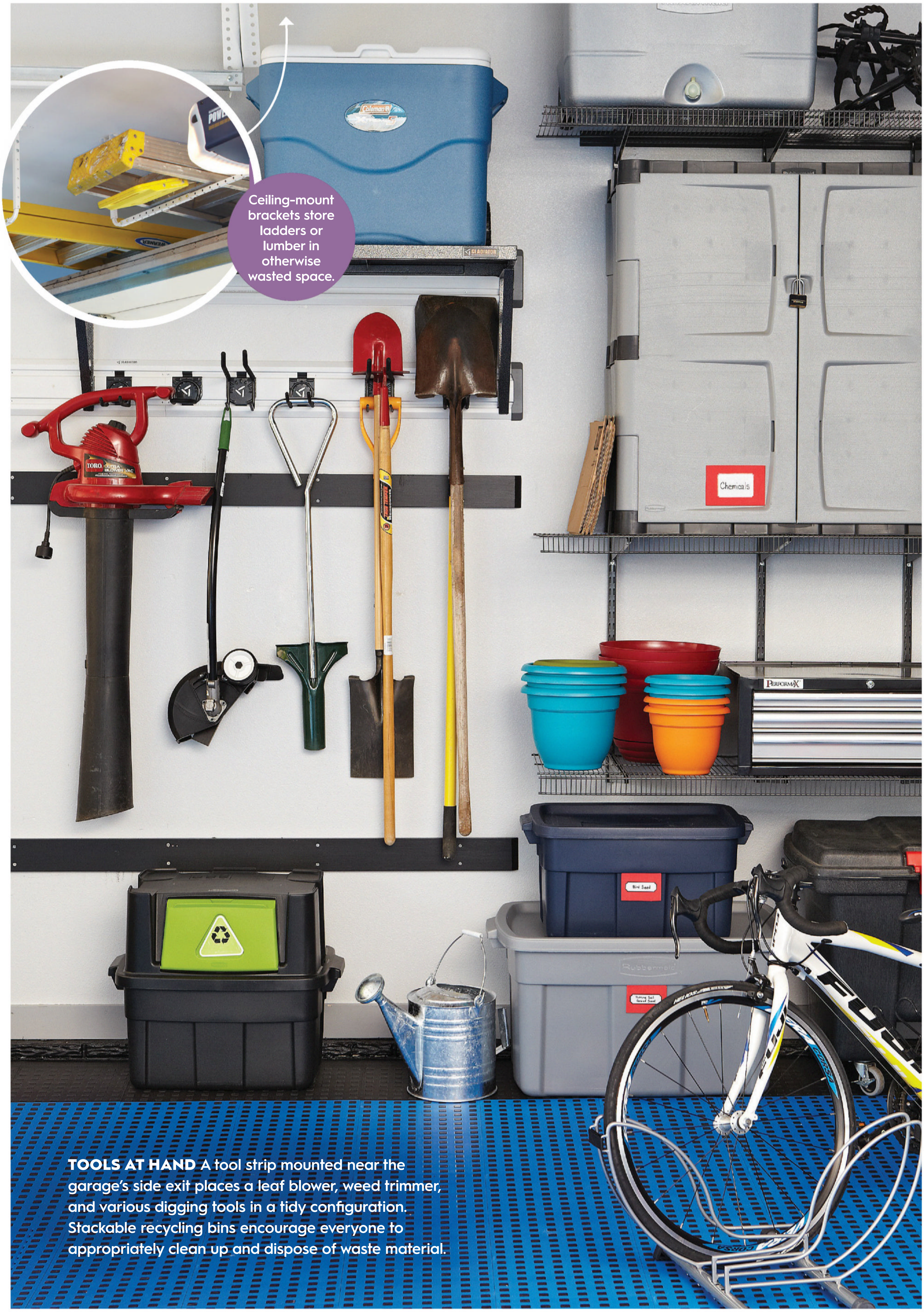
SAFEKEEPING
An armoire-style cabinet, *above right,* sequesters cleaning and automotive supplies behind metal doors. Each category has its own dedicated bin, with heavier containers at waist height for safer retrieval.

READY TO CLEAN
A plastic bin, *right,* groups window cleaners together; when it's time for that chore, you can simply remove the whole bin and tote it where you need it.

Window Cleaning

CLUTTER CURE

15 MINUTES Buy wheeled containers or install casters on a workbench or on heavy bins so you can move them easily across the floor as you are working on projects. Install a high, sturdy shelf to utilize otherwise wasted wall space. Be sure to use heavy-duty anchors fastened into studs to secure the shelf and ensure it can hold heavy supplies and tools.



Ceiling-mount brackets store ladders or lumber in otherwise wasted space.

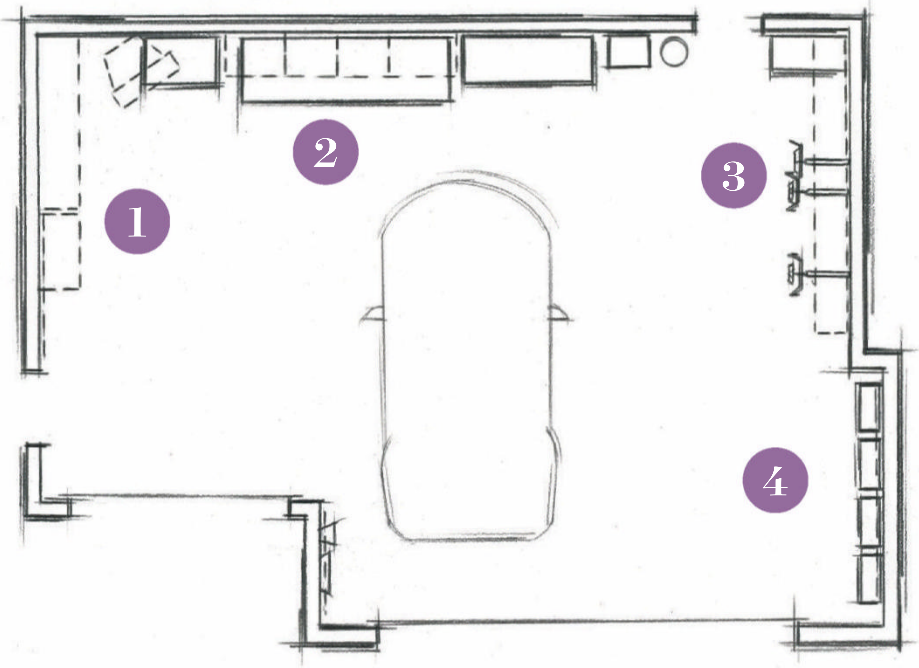
TOOLS AT HAND A tool strip mounted near the garage's side exit places a leaf blower, weed trimmer, and various digging tools in a tidy configuration. Stackable recycling bins encourage everyone to appropriately clean up and dispose of waste material.

HEAVY DUTY
Plastic totes that stack together, *below*, provide mess-free storage for bulk yard supplies, such as potting soil, birdseed, and mulch.

IN THE TRUNK
A canvas trunk organizer for the car, *right*, features three color-coded bags for soccer supplies, swimming gear, or picnic goodies.

IN THE *ZONE*

SMART STORAGE ORGANIZES THE GARAGE AND OFFERS EASY ACCESS TO GEAR.



1 **CLEANING**
Household cleaning supplies line up behind cabinet doors in designated containers.

2 **TOOL AREA**
A rolling toolbox and workbench amp up storage, and a pegboard keeps favorite tools handy.

3 **BIKE STORAGE**
Wall-hung storage and a freestanding rack keep bikes corralled. Extra biking gear is stashed in nearby bins.

4 **SPORTS GEAR**
Balls and other playthings pile into wall-hung storage bins so kids can easily reach and return items. Rackets and riding toys dangle from hooks.

MEET THE PROS

Meet the organizing professionals who offer tips throughout the issue.

JANINE ADAMS

Certified Professional Organizer Janine Adams has been helping clients in St. Louis get organized since 2005. She is the owner of Peace of Mind Organizing, whose organizing team helps clients create dramatic changes in their homes. She blogs regularly at *peaceofmindorganizing.com* and *organizeyourfamilyhistory.com* and, with life coach Shannon Wilkinson, cohosts the podcast *Getting to Good Enough* about overcoming perfectionism.

JANINE ADAMS, CPO, PEACE OF MIND ORGANIZING, ST. LOUIS; *PEACEOFMINDORGANIZING.COM*

WENDY BUGLIO

Wendy Buglio is a Certified Professional Organizer, Productivity Consultant, and Move Manager. She brings 15 years of industry experience to her leadership role at Wendy Buglio Consulting, a team of professional organizers serving clients in the Greater Boston area. With her nonjudgmental approach and calming energy (combined with a healthy dose of reality and a sense of humor), she tackles physical clutter, but also intangible "clutter"—such as tasks, obligations, and commitments—helping to maximize her clients' productivity and organization. She currently serves on the Board of Directors for the National Association of Productivity and Organizing Professionals.

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DEBORAH J. CABRAL

A Certified Professional Organizer and productivity and efficiency consultant and trainer, Deborah J. Cabral launched her company, The DeClutter Coach, in 2010. Growing demand has led to the expansion of the business to include DC Efficiency Consulting, a corporate training and consulting division; *Organization Motivation!,* her 30-minute national television show; and *Organized in 60 Seconds,* nationally syndicated news/lifestyle video segments. In addition to being a seven-time award-winning entrepreneur, Cabral is also a wife, mother, and community volunteer.

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RACHEL FONTAINE

Many organizers will tell you they have always been organized, even as young children. That's not the case for Rachel Fontaine. She was very disorganized and had to learn organization skills as an adult, so she has a deep understanding of her clients' struggles. With a lot of study and even more time spent practicing, she taught herself to be organized, and she knows that if she was able to learn to be organized, others can too. Rachel is a member of NAPO and the Institute for Challenging Disorganization and she holds multiple specialist certificates in her field.

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DINI KLEIN

Dini Klein is a food host, founder of the Prep + Rally family meal prep subscription service, and the author of *Prep + Rally: An Hour of Prep, a Week of Delicious Meals.* Dini has worked with brands such as Walmart, Starbucks, Weight Watchers, Popsugar, and Barilla, and has appeared on national television on CW, Hallmark Channel, and *Access Hollywood.* Prep + Rally is Dini's solution to getting a wholesome dinner on the table on those busy weeknights when juggling parenting and work life feels almost impossible. She shares her creativity in the kitchen to help moms all over the world. You can find her @prepandrally on all social media platforms.

DINI KLEIN, PREP + RALLY, LOS ANGELES; *PREPANDRALLY.COM*

CATHY KRAMER

Cathy Kramer is a degreed, published, and award-winning interior designer with three decades of experience, including with Ethan Allen Interiors, Inc., as Senior Interior Designer for *Better Homes & Gardens* magazine, and as owner of Cathy Kramer Designs. Her clever and functional designs convert clutter into eye candy.

CATHY KRAMER, CATHY KRAMER DESIGNS, DES MOINES; INSTAGRAM @CATHYKRAMERDESIGNS

ANDREW MELLEN

Andrew Mellen is an international speaker, coach, and the Wall Street Journal best-selling author of *Unstuff Your Life!* and *The Most Organized Man in America's Guide to Moving.* He's brought his groundbreaking thought leadership to every media platform, appearing everywhere including TEDx, *The New York Times, Fast Company, Oprah, Martha Stewart Living, HGTV,* and *NPR.* Since 1994, Andrew has helped over 500,000 businesses and people simplify their work and lives. An advocate for simple intentional living, he often teaches on the intersection of organization and spirituality and lives by his motto, "More love, less stuff."

ANDREW MELLEN, NEW YORK CITY AND ST. PETERSBURG, FLORIDA; *ANDREWMELLEN.COM*

JAMIE NOVAK

A clipper of recipes she never prepares, Jamie Novak knows all about the obstacles to getting organized. You may have seen her on morning TV or read one of her bestselling books, including *Keep This, Toss That: The Practical Guide to Tidying Up.* Most days you can find her online teaching virtual classes, which you are invited to log on for; they are free and open to everyone. Find the current calendar of free programs and see how to register on her website. When not at her desk, she is recording her *10 Minute Podcast with Jamie* or taping a new episode of her mini-YouTube show. Go to *JamieNovak.com* to print your free calendar, then follow along with her 10 Minute Tidy of the Day.

JAMIE NOVAK, LOS ANGELES AND NORTHERN NEW JERSEY; *JAMIENOVAK.COM*

BARBARA REICH

Barbara Reich is the founder of Life Organized Inc., a firm specializing in the organization of people, their lives, and physical spaces. From powerful executives to busy parents, clients appreciate Barbara's unwavering confidentiality and eye for design. Barbara's areas of expertise include home and office organization, time management, digital decluttering, organizing for academic success, and maximizing productivity while working from home. As a keynote speaker and consultant, Barbara combines humor, analytical data, and anecdotal evidence to demonstrate how to achieve greater productivity and fulfillment. She has delivered presentations to AT&T, Alliance Bernstein (AB), Apollo Global Management, Blackstone, Gleneagles, Martha Stewart, and TD Bank. Barbara has appeared on the *Today* show, *Inside Edition,* and *Good Morning America,* and has been featured in *The New York Times, Wall Street Journal, New York Post, Time Magazine, Real Simple, InStyle, People StyleWatch, Men's Health, Family Circle, Better Homes & Gardens, AARP Magazine,* and *O Magazine.* She is the author of *Secrets of an Organized Mom,* winner of the Mom's Choice Award.

In 2017, Barbara cofounded Curated Kitchen, a service that incorporates nutrition and wellness in the organization of the kitchen. Working with a registered dietitian, Lara Metz, this platform ensures that the selection and placement of food is consistent with organizing for a healthy lifestyle. Lara Metz, MS, RDN, CDN, is a veteran dietitian and food lover and is the founder of Lara Metz Nutrition, a private practice in New York City.

BARBARA REICH, LIFE ORGANIZED, NEW YORK CITY; *LIFE-ORGANIZED.COM*

HELENE SEGURA

Time management fixer and consultant Helene Segura coaches clients on how to reduce stress and increase profits by telling their time what to do. Since 2006, she has researched productivity and shared her knowledge in keynotes and trainings, as well as in books such as *The Inefficiency Assassin* and *The Great Escape*. She offers a free productivity kick-starter kit and other tips on her website.

HELENE SEGURA, M.A. ED., CPO, LIVINGORDER SAN ANTONIO; *HELENESEGURA.COM*

JAMIE STEELE

Jamie Steele is the owner of Tidy Your Time LLC where she helps clients overcome productivity challenges. An expert in productivity and time management, she is a good-hearted and understanding teacher and coach to her clients. Jamie's specialty is helping clients identify their core values and needs so they can reduce overwhelm and stress and work more efficiently. Jamie is an accomplished speaker, blogger, and magazine contributor. Jamie lives in Pflugerville, Texas with her husband and son.

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KATHY VINES

Kathy Vines is a Certified Professional Organizer, Productivity Specialist, and the owner of Clever Girl Organizing, based in Melrose, Massachusetts. Kathy launched Clever Girl Organizing in early 2013 after a 20-year career in human resources. She works virtually with people all over the world to help them untangle their relationship to stuff and create systems to conquer the chaos around them. She is the author of *Clever Girl's Guide to Living with Less: Break Free from Your Stuff, Even When Your Head and Heart Get in the Way.* Kathy's ideas have been featured in *The Boston Globe, Washington Post, Better Homes & Gardens,* and *Real Simple.* She appeared in a segment on *Inside Edition,* and that video has been viewed more than 2.5 million times on YouTube.

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DANA K. WHITE

Dana K. White is (much to her own surprise) a Decluttering Expert and the creator of the five step No Mess Decluttering Method. Dana shares realistic home management strategies and a message of hope for the hopelessly messy in her books: *Organizing for the Rest of Us, Decluttering at the Speed of Life* (a Wall Street Journal bestseller), and *How to Manage Your Home Without Losing Your Mind.* Dana teaches her strategies through her blog, podcast, and videos at *ASlobComesClean.com* and trains coaches in her unique decluttering process at *DeclutteringCoaches.com.*

DANA K. WHITE; *ASLOBCOMESCLEAN.COM* AND *DECLUTTERINGCOACHES.COM*

KATHY JENKINS

A Certified Professional Organizer, Certified Family Manager Coach, and professional organizer coach, Kathy Jenkins has been helping families and small businesses since 2005. She is also the founder of Come To Order. She often speaks about organizing, and her advice has been published in books and magazines, such as *Better Homes & Gardens, Woman's World, Good Housekeeping,* and *Real Simple.*

KATHY JENKINS, CPO, COME TO ORDER, RICHMOND, VIRGINIA; *COMETOORDERVA.COM*

RESOURCES

For help with organizing your home and information about products and services, contact these retailers and professionals.

KEY

[T] TO THE TRADE
These items or services are not available to the general public. Contact a design professional for help.

[P] PAINT COLOR
Because of the magazine printing process, paint colors depicted on our pages might vary slightly from the manufacturers' colors. Use paint color names or numbers, when provided, as a starting point. To get the exact color you see in the magazine, take the page to a paint retailer for matching.

ON THE COVER

Clock Epy Huts, **small yellow clutch** WOZEAH—Amazon; *amazon.com.* **Large yellow purse, narrow white bin** (bottom middle)—Target; *target.com.* **Calendar—**Staples; *staples.com.* **Bin with wood handle—**Yamazaki; *theyamazakihome.com.*

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ENTRY + LIVING OPENER

Wall color SW 6908 Fun Yellow—Sherwin-Williams; *sherwin-williams.com* [P]. **Clock** Epy Huts, **small yellow clutch** WOZEAH—Amazon; *amazon.com.* **Large yellow purse, narrow white bin** (bottom middle)—Target; *target.com.* **Calendar—**Staples; *staples.com.* **Bin with wood handle—**Yamazaki; *theyamazakihome.com.*

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FAST + EASY FIXES: FAMILY GAME STATION

Console Nolan Entryway Console in dark walnut + antique bronze—West Elm; *westelm.com.* **Banner** Keep It Wild Championship Banner—Oxford Pennant; *oxfordpennant.com.* **Storage boxes** Bigso Linen, **stacking bins** Like-It Brick Bins, **water hyacinth bins—**The Container Store; *containerstore.com.* **Remote control organizer rack—**Yamazaki; *theyamazakihome.com.* **Toilet paper holder** (similar available)—Lowe's; *lowes.com.* **Large floor basket** Better Homes & Gardens—Walmart; *walmart.com.* **Woven rug, table lamp** Knox Adjustable Shaded Table Lamp, **shower caddy** Command Shower Caddy, **canvas wall pockets, games, books—**Target; *target.com.*

Pages 36–41

EASY ENTRIES

Pages 36–37: Wall hook J-Hook in natural brass—Schoolhouse; *schoolhouse.com.* **Rug—**Dash & Albert, an Annie Selke company; *annieselke.com.* **Wood paneling** Hamptons Reclaimed Pine—Stikwood; *stikwood.com.* **Floral tennis shoes, journals on shelf—**Rifle Paper Co.; *riflepaperco.com.* **Dry-erase board above leash—**Three By Three; *threebythree.com.* **Lidded box on top shelf under basket** Bigso, **woven boxes with lids, baskets on wall, small pink wall shelf** Poppin Magnetic Wall Shelf in Blush—The Container Store; *containerstore.com.* **Multicolor woven round basket on top shelf—**Pier 1 Imports; *pier1.com.* **Rain boots, boot tray—**Target; *target.com.* **Dog bowls** (similar available)—Petsmart; *petsmart.com.* **Pages 38–39: Wallpaper** Mare Navy Wave—Brewster Wallcovering; *brewsterwallcovering.com.* **Wooden coat hooks with metal base** Fib Hooks in Mysterious Black—Kvell; *kvellhome.com.* **Rug** Network woven wool rug—Dash & Albert, an Annie Selke company; *annieselke.com.* **Long, thin note board with magnets** EnLister in stainless steel—Three By Three; *threebythree.com.* **Charging dock** (similar available)—ALLDOCK; *alldock.com.* **Tray with headphones** Kawabon—Graf Lantz; *graf-lantz.com.* **Metal dog bowls, dog treats, leash—**Petsmart; *petsmart.com.* **Hairpin leg—**Hairpin Leg Co.; *hairpinlegco.etsy.com.* **Brackets** (end and center)—IKEA; *ikea-usa.com.* **Blue-and-white basket with handles** Laguna Cotton Belly Basket, **black drawers with labels and pulls** Bigso Stockholm—The Container Store; *containerstore.com.* **White metal baskets—**Hobby Lobby; *hobbylobby.com.* **Pages 40–41: Rustic wood ladder—**Wayfair; *wayfair.com.* **Crates, headphones, speaker—**Walmart; *walmart.com.* **Cork and dry-erase boards** Umbra, **orange silicone organizer with mail on top shelf** Softie Grip Grass Organizer by Poppin, **white drawers on top shelf** Like-It Accessory Drawers, **wire basket—**The Container Store; *containerstore.com.* **Dog leash, dog toys—**Petco; *petco.com.* **Charging dock, wooden charging station for watch—**Target; *target.com.* **Rug** Denim Rag Woven Rug—Dash & Albert, an Annie Selke company; *annieselke.com.*

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INSIDE STORY

Wall paint SW 6492 Jetstream, **paint in television nook** SW 6494 Lakeshore—Sherwin-Williams; *sherwin-williams.com* [P]. **Flooring—**Mohawk Industries, Inc.; *mohawkind.com.* **Bookcases, cabinet doors** purchased with wood core, removed and replaced with frosted glass after purchase—Whittier Wood Products; *whittierwood.com.* **Glass for doors—**True Value; *truevalue.com.* **Frosted film for glass—**Menards; *menards.com.* **Shelving**

used to make coffee table Ekby Alex Shelf in White, **tabletops—**IKEA; *ikea-usa.com.* **Caster wheels—**The Home Depot; *homedepot.com.* **Wall-mount television, speaker at television—**Samsung; *samsungusa.com.* **Sofa** Jean Luc—Mitchell Gold + Bob Williams; *mgandbw.com.* **Area rug—**Jaipur; *jaipurrugs.com.* **Sconces** Soho—Shades of Light; *shadesoflight.com.* **Green library boxes in shelving** Bigso, **drawer organizers in coffee table** Linus Shallow Drawer Organizers, **cord-length control bands, electric cord-containing boxes in base cabinet—**The Container Store; *containerstore.com.* **White sticker tags** made from product similar to Post-It Dry Erase Surface—3M Co.; *post-it.com.* **Wood tags on baskets,** holes drilled for attachment after purchase—Michaels; *michaels.com.* **Computer in over-the-arm caddy—**Apple, Inc.; *apple.com.* **Printer—**Canon; *canon.com.*

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KITCHEN + PANTRY OPENER

Wall color SW 6810 Lupine—Sherwin-Williams; *sherwin-williams.com* [P]. **Timer** Alessi—Amazon; *amazon.com.* **Calendar—**Paper Source; *papersource.com.*

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PANTRY POWER-UP

Paint inside pantry SW 6514 Respite, **kitchen walls paint** SW 6533 Mild Blue Island, **island paint** SW 6517 Regatta, **door and trim paint** SW 7042 Shoji White—Sherwin-Williams; *sherwin-williams.com* [P]. **Laminate flooring—**Mohawk Industries, Inc.; *mohawkflooring.com.* **Floorcloth** Pepperberry Vintage Vinyl—Pura Vida Home Décor; *puravidahomedecor.com.* **Pantry shelving and accessories** Ivar—IKEA; *ikea-usa.com.* **Reusable nontoxic food bag containers on left middle shelf** Stasher Bags—Stasher; *stasherbag.com.* **Clear acrylic bins on bottom shelf** Linus, **dark gray plastic containers** Nordic, **clear plastic containers holding lunch-making containers, wire canned-drink container** Iris Gravity can feeder—The Container Store; *containerstore.com.* **Acrylic rectangular and square stacking containers with white lids** from the Pop collection—Oxo; *oxo.com.* **Insulated cloth reusable lunch bags—**Nordic by Nature; *nordiclunchbags.com.* **Gray striped apron hanging from shelf** Threshold collection—Target; *target.com.* **Black barstool at island—**At Home; *athome.com.*

Pages 58–61

SMALL SMARTS

Pages 60–61: Paint color for base cabinets Night Club N500-7, **paint color for wall cabinets** Ultra Pure White 1850—Behr; *behr.com* [P]. **Flooring** Paloma 8x8-inch Encaustic Look Porcelain Tile—Wayfair; *wayfair.com.* **Pendant in kitchen** Bar Chic Pendant Large (similar)—Shades of Light; *shadesoflight.com.* **Light fixture over dining table** (similar available), **dining table and chairs** (similar available)—All Modern; *allmodern.com.*

Pages 62–63

BEDROOM, BATH + CLOSET OPENER

Wall color SW 6747 Argyle—Sherwin-Williams; *sherwin-williams.com* [P]. **Desk lamp** LEPOWER, **charging station—**Amazon; *amazon.com.* **Green candle—**Michael's; *michaels.com.* **Wood bin, woven bin—**Target; *target.com.*

Pages 68–69

FAST + EASY FIXES: BATHROOM VANITY

Makeup mirror (similar available)—The Home Depot; *homedepot.com.* **Mounted mirror holders** The Harvey Toothbrush and Razor Holder, The Archer Magnet Mount—Tooletries; *tooletries.com.* **Desk organizer—**Yamazaki; *theyamazakihome.com.*

Pages 70–73

CLOTHES OVERHAUL

Professional organization consultation: Aby Garvey, Simplify 101; *simplify101.com;* and Deborah J. Cabral, The DeClutter Coach; *declutttercoachdeb.com.* **Closet organization system—**Rubbermaid; *rubbermaid.com.* **Folding wall hook** (similar available), **wooden hangers, shoulder shapers for hangers, skirt hangers, pants hangers** all from the Bumerang collection—IKEA; *ikea-usa.com.* **Top-shelf storage containers** Iris—Target; *target.com.* **Dividers** Like-It Portrait File Sorter, **fabric storage cubes** Poppin Storage Cubes, **sweater shelving dividers** Elfa Ventilated Wire shelf dividers, **stackable shoe bins, valet rod** Elfa Expandable valet rod, **shirt hangers—**The Container Store; *containerstore.com.* **Hanging organizer used for workout clothing** Charleston Closet Organizer, sold in packet of two from the Better Homes & Gardens Collection—Walmart; *walmart.com.* **Liner for wire shelving** sold in 10-foot roll by Shelf-It—Amazon; *amazon.com.*

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WORK + HOBBY OPENER

Wall color SW 6558 Plummy—Sherwin-Williams; *sherwin-williams.com* [P]. **Clock** Plumeet, **purple pencils** Zhanmai—Amazon; *amazon.com.* **Rope bins, clear bin with ribbon—**Target; *target.com.* **Crafting books—**Michael's; *michaels.com.* **Calendar—**Staples; *staples.com.* **Bin with wood handle—**Yamazaki; *theyamazakihome.com.*

Pages 78–79

FAST + EASY FIXES: MOBILE OFFICE

Office cart 3-Tier Bar Cart (similar available)—Wayfair; *wayfair.com.* **Shower caddy** Madesmart Hang It Organizer—Target; *target.com.* **Stackable drawer, weather-tight file box, pen cup for pegboard** Bello, **clear small shoe drawer, grip liner, 360 braided extension cord** Electrical Habitat, **white plastic storage bin with handles, medium maple rack, portable file storage box—**The Container Store; *containerstore.com.* **Printer** Canon Pixma TR150 Wireless Portable Business Printer, **scanner** Epson Workforce ES-60W Wireless Portable Scanner—Office Depot/Office Max; *officedepot.com.* **Flip-tite container** Better Homes & Gardens—Walmart; *walmart.com.*

Pages 80–81

FAST + EASY FIXES: UTILITY CLOSET

Storage box Favori in mint, **storage basket** Tosca, **under-shelf rack** Tosca Undershelf Organizer—Yamazaki; *theyamazakihome.com.* **Cabinet** Bisley 5-Drawer Cabinet Blush Pink, **stackable bin** iDesign Clear Linus Deep Stackable Plastic Bin, **folding stepstool, lazy Susan** iDesign Linus Divided Lazy Susan, **basket** Nordic Basket in medium and large, **storage bin with lid—**The Container Store; *containerstore.com.* **Hooks** Command, **braided hooks—**Target; *target.com.* **Collapsible bucket** Sammart 2.6 gallons—Amazon; *amazon.com.* **Dry-erase dots** (similar available)—The Home Depot; *homedepot.com.* **Handheld vacuum** 12V Max Dustbuster Advanced Clean+ Cordless Handheld Vacuum—Black+Decker; *blackanddecker.com.* **Wine holder** iDesign Stackable Wine Holder (similar available)—Williams Sonoma; *williams-sonoma.com.* **Handheld steamer** Cirrus No. 2, **vintage-look hanging dustpan and brush set, broom from dustpan set—**Food52; *food52.com.* **Cleaning supplies** The Mindful Collection, The Elevated Home Collection—Pure & Peaceful LLC; *pureandpeaceful.com.*

Pages 84–89

GARAGE TUNE-UP

Storage system—Gladiator GarageWorks; *gladiatorgarageworks.com.* **Track systems under worktable and holding rakes and brooms** FastTrack—Rubbermaid; *rubbermaid.com.* **Car-cleaning kit** Ultimate Car Wash Bucket, **wheel and tire kit—**Griots; *griotsgarage.com.* **Bike cleaning tub and contents** Chain Gang Chain Cleaning System, **bike tire pump, bike tools—**Park Tool; *parktool.com.* **Bike rack—**Delta Cycle Corp.; *theartofstorage.com.* **Flooring—**Weather Tech; *techfloor.com.* **Chalkboard labels and tags, dry-erase labels—**Staples; *staples.com.* **Labels with black border—**Michaels; *michaels.com.* **Canvas trunk organizers** (similar available)—The Container Store; *containerstore.com.*

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ONE MORE IDEA

Countertop support brackets CounterBalance—Amazon; *amazon.com.* **Acrylic file boxes, signature binders in white—**russell+hazel; *russellandhazel.com.* **Magazine files** in graphite and white, **photo box** in graphite, **acrylic drawer organizer, clear pencil cup, paper drawers** in graphite—The Container Store; *containerstore.com.* **Barstool** Transit by m.a.d. Furniture—Wayfair; *wayfair.com.* **Barstool seat paint** Hot Lips 2077-30—Benjamin Moore; *benjaminmoore.com* [P]. **White fin file sorter—**Poppin; *poppin.com.* **Magnetic hourglass—**Kikkerland; *kikkerland.com.* **Rug** Catamaran stripe indoor/outdoor rug in black/ivory—Dash & Albert, an Annie Selke Company; *annieselke.com.*

MISC
FRUIT & VEG
SOUPS
PROTEIN

WORK SMART

A one-wall office near the front door—or anywhere you have extra space—helps you keep your household running smoothly.

WRITER **RENEE FREEMON MULVIHILL** PRODUCER **MEREDITH LADIK DRUMMOND** PHOTOGRAPHER **JAY WILDE**

EASY TO ACCESS

Storage cubes attached to the wall and a standing desk carve out a convenient place for paying bills, sorting mail, and filing important papers.

1 STANDING DESK

This slim desk features open cubbies that provide easy access to a laptop and essential office supplies. A barstool offers a comfy spot to perch.

2 MAIL SLOTS

Include labeled mail slots for each family member so everyone can grab their mail on the way into the house.

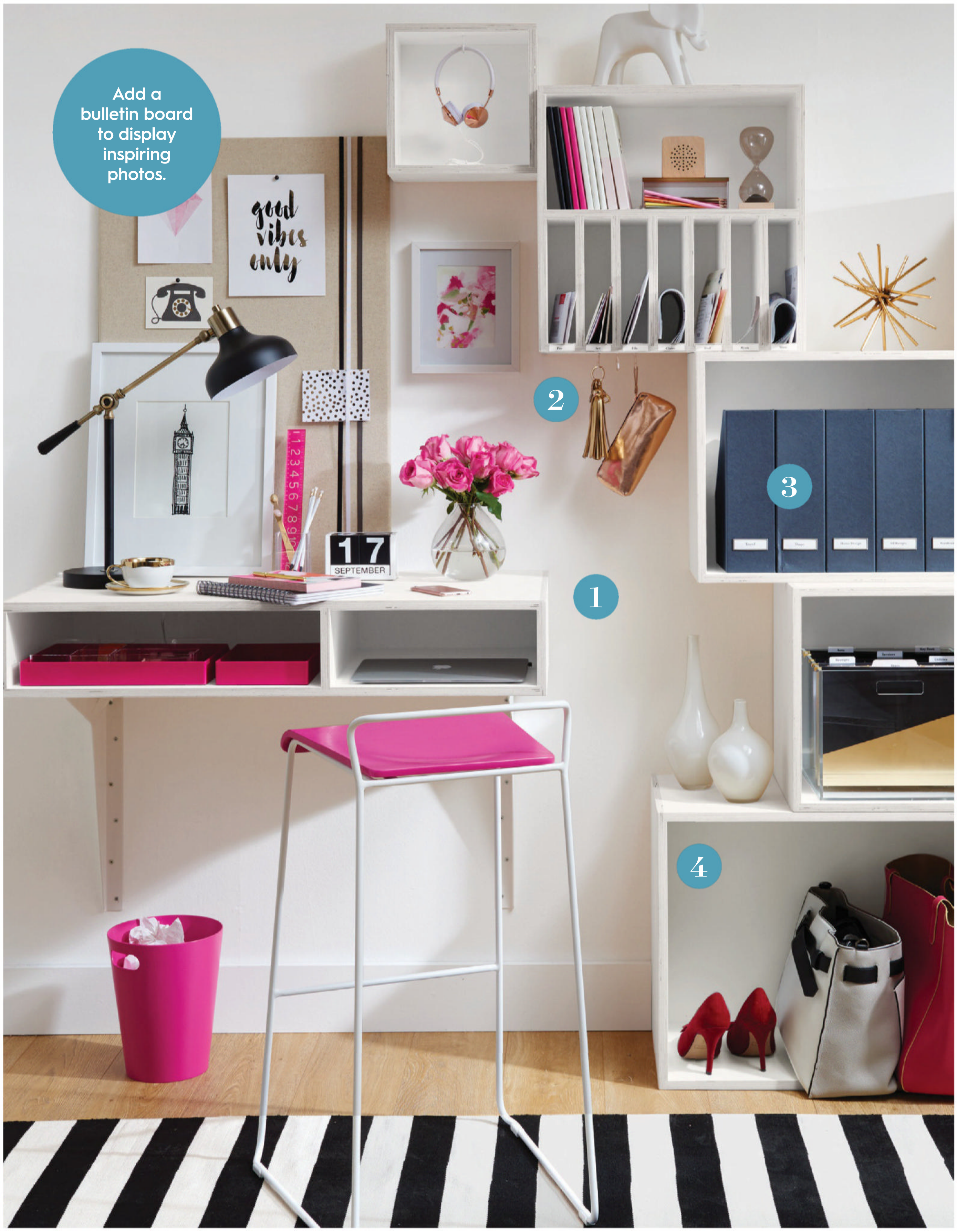
3 SLEEK BINDERS

Organize paperwork by year or family member in binders and hide the mess.

4 PERSONAL GEAR

Dedicate a cubby at floor level for shoes and bags to keep the area looking tidy.

RESOURCES BEGIN ON *PAGE 93.*



Add a bulletin board to display inspiring photos.

Secrets of Getting Organized™ (ISSN 1933-2696), Spring 2023. *Secrets of Getting Organized* is published three times a year in March, June, and December by Meredith Operations Corp., 1716 Locust St., Des Moines, IA 50309-3023. Better Homes & Gardens is a registered trademark in the United States, Canada, and Australia. Better Homes & Gardens marca registrada en México. © Meredith Operations Corp. 2023. All rights reserved. Printed in the U.S.A.

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Kitchen Upgrades for Every Personality

2
1
Milk
Bread
Apples
3

Get ready to spruce up your indoor space this spring. Learn how you can use the 3M CLAW™ Drywall Picture Hanger and damage-free Command™ Products to organize and personalize your kitchen.

Try These DIY Projects

1 FOR THE ON-THE-GO COOKING PRO

Mount a chalkboard with **Command™ Picture Hanging Strips** and write down your grocery list so you'll never miss an ingredient. Bonus: You can stash all of your chalk in the **Command™ Accessory Organizer**.

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20 lb | 9 kg
CONT. 4 PARS / PARES

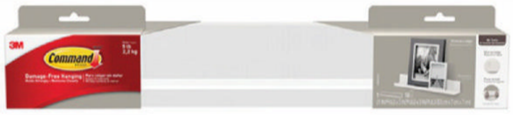
3M
CLAW
DRYWALL PICTURE HANGER
45
POUNDS
MARK
PUSH
HANG

2 FOR THE DECORATING DYNAMO

Enhance the room and create the illusion of even more kitchen space by hanging a statement mirror with the **3M CLAW™ Drywall Picture Hanger**.

3 FOR THE ORGANIZING EXPERT

Ensure your go-to spices are always within reach by creating a DIY spice rack using the **Command™ Picture Ledge**.



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